

# 毒舌少女の ために 帰宅部 辞めました

Dokuzetsu  
shoujo no  
tame ni  
kikaibu  
yomeimashta

水埜アテルイ

aterui mizuno

イラスト/ななかぐら

ill.nanakagura

# ***Table of Contents***

***Introduction***

***Vol.1 Chapter 1 (Source: Gakusei Translations)***

***Chapter 2 (Source: Gakusei Translations)***

***Vol.1 Chapter 3 (Source: Gakusei Translations)***

***Vol.1 Chapter 4 (Source: Not So Friendly Translations)***

***Chapter 5 (Source: Not So Friendly Translations)***

***Vol.1 Chapter 6 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Vol.1 Chapter 7 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Chapter 8 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Chapter 9 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Chapter 10 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Chapter 11 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Chapter 12 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Chapter 13 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Chapter 14 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Chapter 15 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Chapter 16 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Chapter 17 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Chapter 18 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Chapter 19 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Chapter 20 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Chapter 21 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Chapter 22 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Chapter 23 (Source: Airus Translations)***

***Disclaimer***

# ***I Quit the Going-Home Club for a Girl with a Venomous Tongue***

**Dokuzetsu shōjo no tame ni kitaku-bu yamemashita •** □□□□□□□□□□□□  
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Sakaki Sui, a second year high school student who self-proclaims himself as a professional member of the going-home club, holds his afterschool days that he can freely use for anything as something of utmost importance. With no need for an entry form, or a withdrawal form, it is definitely a pure form of club activities, the going-home club. While having the greatest pride as a member, he was given a mission by a beautiful teacher during the fall of his second year.

“The problem child, Hiwa Arina, cure her venomous tongue.”

The Hiwa Arina, who was was only scored full points in appearance, who trampled over the confessions and courtship of many guys. That day, he was asked to cure the girl who was given the nickname of “The Venomous Tongued Rose.” For him, as a member of the world’s best club, the act of staying after school was a contradiction. However, he couldn’t refuse a request from his beautiful teacher, and is now forced to spend his after school time at school.

The beautiful young girl that used her venomous tongue for seemingly violent acts.

The going-home club member that can only speak in jokes.

The crazy school life of two people filled with the chaos of abuse and jokes. But, he has yet to find out about the secret that she was hiding...

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# ***Vol.1 Chapter 1***

Source: Gakusei Translations

[REPORT](#)

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Hey everyone! This is a bit of a surprise since a week ago we just announced we were taking a break from this series. However, we got an email from someone that was interested in taking over the translation while we would edit and post the translation for him. Please welcome MischievousBoyz to the site and give him some love in the comments.

-Tortuga

Hello, this is the new translator, little Boyz That's all. sorry for the editor, TreeTortuga, for my messy TL. and the boss, Radaemon, please bear with me ^^ thank you.

-MischievousBoyz

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## ***Chapter 2***

Source: Gakusei Translations

[REPORT](#)

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# ***Vol.1 Chapter 3***

Source: Gakusei Translations

[REPORT](#)

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# Vol.1 Chapter 4

Source: Not So Friendly Translations

[REPORT](#)

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Welp I am an idiot some things got messed up this should be the fixed version if not Ill Re Do it but tat the moment Im am Super tired Ill sleep for a couple of days cya in assassin

***"That's it!"***

"What!?"

I rolled into the library.As expected Arina was in the library.She likes books, and the library is her second home.It's not a literary girl, but Arina seems to read books anyway.

***"After school, you and I are helping the women's Soft Tennis Club.Understood?"***

***"I understood.Why would I do that?....."*** TN:Is it supposed to be Soft ball Club or Soft tennis I never heard of anything called Soft tennis unless im living under a rock She is weak when she is in the library.

There are strict rules in the library one of them is to keep the peace and quiet in the library , speaking of the library.I'm not sure if this is a good idea, but I think it's good for now that she has her Fangs hidden.

***"It's part of the Alina rehabilitation project.I'll have you take it.Don't worry, I'll join you. So don't play for a second.—"*** Beaten in the corner of the book.I was able to get back from the Sanzu River.A dead pet was on the river bank. TN: guessing that was a metaphor Hmm Never was good at figuring Stuff like this so if anyone in the comments can tell me what it means Please do you saved my ass. ***"No violence"***

***"Die."***

***"There is not much time left for lunch break. That's why after school we will meet at that former staff room."***

***"Oi"***

***"Please be quiet in the library.And Please bring your gym clothes."***

***"That's disgusting! You stupid Perv!!"***

I felt like I got the victory.

After the seminar that was called to class today I went to the former staff room

After a while, I knocked at the door with the momentum of destroying the door.There is only one person who can think of the bastard who does the destruction activity without taking care of the school equipment. ***"Open up!!!, Know you're in here"*** ***"I'm in the middle of a change of clothes.If you really want to see it, open it right now.No, I'll open it."***

Hey! Jump out the window! Die"

***"I can't stop my right arm.It seems that there is no way I want to open the door.Shit! My right hand is against my will"***

Gacha Bitch!! TN:hehe its no in their but I still used that phrase ***"Forgive me, Arina. I transcended to one dimension. Why wouldn't you open it?"*** The door is frosted and the outline of Alina is dimly reflected in the glass.It seems to be pressing the door desperately.

***"Good, change your damn clothes!"***

I got serious. One hundred eighty-five centimeters of power.

***"Kyaaa!"***

The door opens vigorously. Arina brought up her hands in front of her face as if she was looking dazzling, and looked at me through the gaps between her fingers.That's what you're looking at.

***"You should get dressed soon, too."I'll be waiting in the hallway."***

My taste is not written in my status, such as a half-naked and rampant hobby. It is basically a gentleman. Naturally I met with Arina in a state of having finished changing clothes.

Arina is stunned.It's the first time I've seen Arina with such a stunned expression in the human history of expressions. When I was enjoying such admiration, a meteorite fell in my bedside table.To be precise, Arina's sharp punches shook all my guts.I crouched down because of that shock.It was about vomiting the large intestine from the mouth.

***"I will kill you if you come in.I will hold it in a dark room connected to a chain and listen to the Anpanman March forever at a loud enough volume to tear the tympanic membrane. I will only give water and bread.don't cha like it?"***

I nodded " Hei " without any resistance

When the costume change was over, Arina opened the door.I was sitting in a physical education sitting and I get up with a reflex.

TN: Physical Education Sitting is Criss Cross AppleSauce taught to you in Kindergarten

I was impressed that the hairstyle she had after became a ponytail, so I am motivated unexpectedly.It's cute if you keep silent.

I'll hit you again."

***"No, no violence.Pacifism is an illusion, but it makes sense to strive for it.Learn from Reverend King.Do you know?Reverend King."***

***"I know. I'm going. I'm going."*** TN: I search it up and this is what he means Chukwuemeka Ezeugo, simply known by his sobriquet Reverend King, is a Christian preacher from Anambra State, South-east Nigeria. In 2006, he rose to nationwide recognition following the murder of a church member, Ann Uzoh.

There is as much sheer knowledge. Even high school students who know the name of Rev. King are not so. Honestly I was happy to be able to do this conversation.

***"The women's tennis club is sweating today due to its club activity."***

Everyone's wearing something that flutters like a skirt. I don't know much about it, but it looks like it's shameless to me. Think about the man's eyes, you bastard. Think of the constituents in the brains of high school boys. As for me, it is composed of 80% **"Sincerity"** and 20% **"Appetite"**, but the brains of the average high school boy are composed of 10% **"Lycy"**. Yes, it is a mass of libido. Remember, women's tennis clubs. Men other than me are basically drowning.

Alina was about to get hit by the sunlight. I was fortunate enough to lend a hat. When I thought that she received it honestly, she said to me, ***"It's just because Dinko has a hat."***

***"Oh, it's amazing."***

Shirana ran up. Then I looked at the person next to me and she was frightened ***"Oh, Mrs. Arina!? What's wrong?"*** Arina who loses a glance. A strange-looking shit, you. The arms were folded to show bad mood.

***"Shirana. I and Arina are the recovery officers. Did you meet with the manager?"***

***"Yeah. Welcome. I mean, the chief is a peeler."***

***"Is that so!"***

***"I should have said it on that occasion. Just bring the racket and hit back the ball that flew towards that lawn."***

***"Yosh, Lets go Arina"***

"Could you do it "

"Leave it to us "

***"yeah"***

The room was clean and comfortable. But there is no fence. There is a wall on one side of the net, though there is a field of grass on the other side. That's why she wants us to collect the balls flying to the grass side. This is certainly a factor that leads to a significant loss of practice time.

Me and Arina borrowed a racket and we went to the lawn. Already on the lawn there are scattered balls all around. It will take some time to collect them.

Immediately I grabbed a ball and swung the racket eagerly.

***"What's wrong?"***

Hold the ball with your left hand, float it a bit, and then swipe like a wind with your racket. However, it does not hit even if it shakes for a while.

***"Shit avoid the ball"***

It's a great game, but it needs more levels. But it hit the part of the edge rather than the part of the net of the racket, it flew in an unexpected direction.

***"The difficulty level is too high..... What is this sport?..."***

I am a tennis inexperienced person. It is the day to celebrate tennis for the first time today. I do not know this can be called tennis. It is also the first time I touched the racket. It was squeezed out to hit this huge net, but it seems that the racket is laughing at me.

There was Arina who beats a pleasant sound and beats down immediately on the side of such an ultra amateur. What a guy. Are you a pro? I watched it closely to imitate it, and I shook it vigorously.to avoid the balls too

***“Are you stupid?”***

Where is the No. 4 machine pilot or grandfather. Do you not have to fight the apostles?

***“Tennis is too difficult, Arina-San”***

***"You agreed to do it, didn't you?" Just do your job"***

***"Even if you say so. The balls will avoid me."***

***“That’s right”***

What is that?English so? Add something.Oh, I'll clean it up again.What are you doing?

[illegible]

TN:I got lost so if anyone can correct me please do Now. Hit it— It seems that the person who is lying on the lawn seems to have liked you ball.It falls so that it sticks to the lawn.Lawn and bed-in without a scab on the racket.That's bullshit.I don't know what to do.

***"I can't hit it it's so stupid"*** The pilot of unit nibble has spoken to me.

*"Why are you trying to hit the frame, not the nett.It's not a sword.Do you want to go undercover? Why don't you go back to Edo?"*

Eh, what is that term.

***"In Japanese please"***

***"Now! If it's not a part of the net, it won't hit or jump!"***

***“I hit it ...”***

***“If you are conscious that the face of the racket is perpendicular to the ground, you will hit! It’s stupid! If you fly with flies, it’s still fun”***

I feel that BAKA is likely to become a universal language because it is a series of stupid. Anyway, I would like to make some effort, so I will try as the pilot of the Aircraft No. 7 says.

Then it was unpopular but it hit the ball and flew away.

***"You flew!"***

***“Noisy. You’re determined to fly. Do more and more.”***

I grabbed the knack and sent one after another with the paccom. This is interesting inside. The sound was good, but the feeling transmitted to the hand was also pleasant.

Oh, oh, I say back with a loud voice. No fun. At a little distance away, Arina was hitting with a beautiful form. I also think that I am a good amateur. The

aura that crawls is different. Because of that, the girls in the court were paying close attention to Arina.

You are not a popular person!

TN: He was talking to the ball and imagining as a pilot Chunni hahahaha

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# Chapter 5

Source: Not So Friendly Translations

[REPORT](#)

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(T/N: Holla, New chapter been finished forgot to check over it and I have not started any translations i think c4 of Kage has been translated only 1 page yeah sorry about that Ill get back to it, oh and read Pure Love X Insult Complex good story really good well anyhow um I am now Sadistic Person hahahah well enjoy the chap brudda!)

I don't really remember how many shots I had hit, but I finally got a break. It was enough exercise to work up a sweat, actually.

We were playing in doubles near the break. The ball hardly flew, so we were just watching most of the time.

I didn't understand the rules, but I watched the game while guessing the technical terms I heard. I could tell what was going on, but somehow the server has trouble handling it. It's an area that requires simultaneous interpreters.

Arina's eyes are glued to the game and her arms folded. She's taking it surprisingly serious.

When the game was over, I took a break as if nothing had happened.

Shirona came to us during our break.

***"Tennis is hard."***

***"Yeah. At first. But once you get used to it, it's fun."***

Shirona seemed to be interested in Arina. While I was sitting there awkwardly, by my side, there was Arina stroking her glossy, white, bare feet. I felt a sense of superiority against her, who was curled up like a house cat. How about it, Arina? You're a cat.

However, she gets angry when I stare at her too much.

***"What."***

See! This beautiful girl became immediately angry. I'm sure her boiling point is about twenty-five degrees Celsius.

***"Hm? Nothing, I was just thinking about how good you are at tennis. Have you ever played before?"***

***"Just a little."***

***"Is that so! That's why it was so beautiful."***

I joined the conversation between Shirona and Arina because it was becoming awkward.

***"Arina, you have a knack for it. You handle yourself like a pro even though you are an amateur. Why didn't you join the club?"***

Arina replied as she looked at the empty sky.

***"Because I didn't really understand."***

***"What about club activities?"***

***"I didn't know what to do in the club itself, and it seemed boring. What kind of answers do you want from me? Shut up, neanderthal."***

***"I understand it all too well, I didn't come in for a similar reason, either."***

***"Is that so..."***

Yeah. That's how it was.

Shirona rounded her eyes though. It was probably because it was rare for Arina to speak properly. If my position was reversed with her, I would have been surprised as well.

The manager told me that the break was over and the match started again. It seems that ball recovery is not necessary anymore.

Pakone pakone

And a refreshing sound echoes through the court. I love this sound. The sound of a train's gatangotong resembles that sensation where the rattling sound of the train sounds somehow pleasant. Do you understand? It's a nostalgic feeling. It would be great if this scene was streamed with Dvořák's ***"New World"*** playing in the background.

(ED/N: IX symphony e-moll ***"New World"***. Dvořák's most popular and most played piece.)

I felt that it would be better to go home before Arina gets irritated because my duty as a ball boy was over. And it seems like she also wants to return too.

***"Let's go home, Arina."***

"That's ... "

***"You're not going home?"***

***"I'll leave when you slit your wrist.."*** What was that? Has the Earth's magnetic field finally gone crazy? No, she had the option of not going home. I thought she was tired so...

Respecting her intentions, she remained and watched the game.

It was past six o'clock. It is not good to stay any more than this..

I finally decided to go home at this time because the atmosphere of club activities was slowly coming to an end. Arina was also preparing to organize and return with her luggage.

***"Thank you, Arina! Thank you."***

***"No. I had a good time here. Thanks."***

***"Come anytime!"***

***"Oh, okay. I'll tell you when I'll participate again."***

***"All right! Cya!"***

Me and Arina left the tennis court.

We headed towards the school gate. Probably tomorrow there will be a rumor about us. That is because the scene of Arinagoing home alongside a man would be quite shocking. Actually I am also surprised. It's unbelievable that this venomous rose is walking shoulder-to-shoulder with someone like me.

I glance at Arina sideways.. I keep my eyes to the front, arch my back and move like a model striding on a fashion runway.. It seems that our man is fascinated by this figure and will fall in love with it.

***"Don't look at me. I'll kill you."***

She threatened me with a death glare that showed no signs of amusement.. If you make a joke like that I will probably get wiped out of this world without any of my DNA left behind. I would have to let my younger sister continue my bloodline. No, I don't want to think of a man who marries my little sister. The moment I witness it, I'll let loose a SAM missile.

(In the raws it said some kind of missile so ill used a specific kind of missile it was weird so sorry)

(ED/N: Surface-to-air missile, or ground-to-air missile. Specifically designed to destroy aircraft from the ground.)

But as I thought about it, I felt a dark and menacing gaze next to me, so I changed the topic.

***"Was it fun?"***

***"Decent."***

***"That's good."***

***"Will you stop treating people like guinea pigs? The escaped chimpanzees aren't doing well. Go back to the zoo as soon as possible."***

***"You're demoting me from neanderthal to chimpanzee?! Although, I'm not experimenting. It's for the sake of your rehabilitation, so don't worry. I'm doing it for you."***

***"Haaaaa....."***

She sighs and drops her shoulders. The reason why I didn't break my promise was because this person wants to change. Even today it was a great achievement. I was happy with it.

I arrived at the school gate, and the residential district spread out in front of me.

***"See you tomorrow after school."***

***"So be it."***

I like it. Isn't it possible to live alone?

Arina turned her back to me and began to walk. She proceeded to disappear into the alley, as the trail of sound made by her leather shoes echoed behind her. As I watched, I hoped and prayed that a gust of wind would flip up her skirt but instead just a breeze stroked my cheeks.

Life doesn't always work out my way.

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# Vol.1 Chapter 6

Source: Airus Translations

[REPORT](#)

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Title: Misunderstanding

***"Sui, are the rumors true?"***

Takane Makoto came up to me during bathroom break with a mysterious look on his face.

***"That I'm not really human?"***

***"What the hell? That's not what I'm talking about."***

Makoto was trying to communicate by moving his hands in a jerky way. Or it seems that he's trying hard to twist something out. If he was going to leak, why not hurry up? Or was it a habit?

***"Why are you so unhappy? You're a pre-spawn sea turtle, aren't you?"***

***"Hey, Sui, are you seeing anyone right now?"***

Makoto said in a whisper.

***"Unfortunately, the seat next to me is empty."***

***"That's right, isn't it!"***

***[T/N: Something seems familiar....]***

I let out a breath of relief. I thought that this guy might have been interested in me. Sorry, but I don't have a thing for gay people.

***"I'm so happy that I don't have a girlfriend. Don't worry, I'll be single forever. I asked my sister for the Sakaki genes. When I asked her that, she hit me about 10 times, but I think the safety of the Sakaki gene was secured."***

***"That's not what I meant! There was a rumor going around that Sui was going out with Hiwa. I couldn't believe that Hiwa was going out with a weirdo like Sui."***

I had roughly expected it to be something like that, but I didn't know to what extent. I realized the horror of rumors.

You can't be too careful because sometimes rumors could become fact. I'm afraid that those who hear the rumors will pass them on as ***"reality"***. And that they'll branch out and eventually turn into chaos.

***"Arina and I, huh? Do you know the source of these rumors?"***

***"It's just a rumor, I don't know the details. You're not really dating, are you?"***

***"We're not. I've only spoken to her recently. If we're going to be suspected of being in a relationship because of that, we're going to get married the moment I touch her."***

***"I wonder... I was impatient. I was worried that Sui was lost."***

Surprisingly, Makoto seemed to be taking it seriously. I think he cared about me because he once confessed to Arina in the past and got depressed. I'm sure someone who witnessed the tennis match and the walk to the school gates spread the rumors. It's not particularly damaging to me, but I'm sure Arina would be furious, saying,

'Why would I go out with a guy who looks like he came from a sewer? You wanna be erased? Then why don't you throw dynamite at the White House? If I was going out with that, I'd rather kiss the larvae of a canabun. If you spread anymore rumors, you'll be cold in bed tomorrow morning.' **[T/N: Search up "canabun larvae" if you want, but you'll probably be fine without it.]**

I'm scared of that.

I don't want to pass away before turning 20 years old. I'm getting anxious, and I thought about checking out Arina's class, but the bathroom break was coming to an end.

**"Okay. Thanks, Makoto."**

**"I'm glad I'm not too late..."**

It was probably close to being too late already, so I decided to let fate take its course. The next class was political science. Let's learn politics and change my destiny. One man can change the world. Che Guevara, the revolutionary, had done it. I should be able to change the thoughts of one girl.

**[T/N: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Che\\_Guevara](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Che_Guevara)]**

I couldn't concentrate on the class from beginning to end.

I kept feeling unknown vibrations from the class next to me with my sixth sense. I was surprised that I had an organ that could sense it, but I was in awe of the strength of Arina's grudge. Well, although it's all a conjecture.

That's why I decided to go take a peek.

Sure enough, as soon as I stepped out into the hallway, I heard **"See. That guy, he's the one."** and I could see girls huddled together, glancing at me. I waked past them with a casual expression and peeked out from the hallway as the door to the next class was fully open.

Then, there was one student who stared at me with a horrible expression. I don't know if she's got a GPS on me, but she found me in an instant. Although Arina didn't get up from her seat, she didn't even look at the paperback book she had in her hand, and she was killing me with her glare. I didn't want to die, so I decided to leave.

But when I turned around, I saw Shirona standing there. She was staring at me with an upward glance.

**"What's up?"**

**"No. Un."**

Shirona turned away and walked into the classroom. This was going to be a mess.

The chime that signaled the end of class echoed through the school and the student let out a mouthful of words, **"It's over!"**

I walked out into the hallway to grab a broom from the locker to start cleaning. Then I turned around to go back to the classroom and saw Arina approaching me, also holding a broom. Her long hair was tied up and hanging from her left shoulder, and she clutched her broom in her right hand like a weapon.

I went straight to the classroom door and put my right foot out to close the distance of five meters. Analyzing the speed at which Arina was walking, the door intersected with it.

I could clearly hear the sound of mine and Arina's shoes. Our eyes met and sparks flew in the air. This girl is going to kill me. She's got the eyes of a hunter.

I stopped after two steps. Arina stopped in response, as well. We stared at each other. The students who were passing by looked at us curiously. Of course they did. I held the broom in front of my chest since I could be attacked at any moment, while Arina stood upright, hiding it behind her back.

A war was about to break out.

I remembered the nostalgic scent of war.

I put my finger on the trigger and catch the enemy's face on the top of the shining star. If you squeeze it once, the god of steel will roar with a hammer and the spouted shell will shine like diamond dust and fall on the ground.

Ahh... close your eyes — close your eyes. Can you hear me? The sound of tanks shaking the earth and brave soldiers kicking at the ground with their feet. Do you remember the humiliation of hiding in the trenches and crawling like a mud dragon to avoid the bullets rampaging above your head? Do you still have your family photo, obscured by dirt and blood? When the enemy battalion destroys you, and the enemy passes by, you just bury your face in the mud, pretending to be dead to live, and the insects that cling to your face as if to mock you. Are these images still seared into your brain?

***"Arina. Take it easy."***

I spoke to her in my usual tone, trying to break the tension. But Arina's face didn't budge. Was she a 'thinker'?

Neither of us moved. And as if numbed by the fact that neither of us were moving, Arina relaxed her shoulders and started walking as if I had never existed before.

Thank God. Just as I thought that, I felt a sharp pain in my left shin, and I reflexively groaned. ***"Geez"***. I thought I had broken it. Arina turned down the hallway and disappeared. It looked like she slashed the broom at the last second. You kunoichi. ***[T/N: Kunoichi = Female Ninja]***

I was in the middle of coming up with a name that would fit nicely in the ***"ex-staff room"*** when the door opened with a thumping noise. I wondered if the dam had broken.

Here comes Arina.

***"Hey. How are you doing?"***

I raised my hand and tried to be friendly. I was trying to create a brighter atmosphere, since there was a contentious atmosphere.

However, trampling on the challenge, Arina started reading again. Are her ears a decoration?

I was thinking of going to visit the soft tennis club again today. But it was raining hard, so they wouldn't be playing outside. The wrinkles between Arina's eyebrows were as big as the Grand Canyon, perhaps because of the rain.

***"What are you looking at? I hope you drown in oil."***

***"Don't bite like that. If you were softer, you'd be perfect. Why not do that?"***

She ignored my question and kept reading. She's a book addict.

***"From today, can this room simply be called 'club room'? 'Ex-Staff room' is too long."***

***"It's funny how this is a club activity."***

***"Well, it's not a club activity. So what else is there to do?"***

***"Isn't it fine?"***

***"Wow, that's awful. I don't accept low quality stuff."***

I joked, but Arina didn't get it, and switched to a death-like blank look in her eyes. She should at least be ashamed of herself.

***"What about Rose Garden? I don't know if you know this, but people say you're a 'rose'."***

***"I see."***

***"Because you have good looks, but if you try to touch them, they'll stab you."***

***"I see."***

***"I don't like the look of it."***

***"I see."***

God forbid the phrase ***"I see"*** be used.

***"What is this Rose Garden, a gang?"***

***"It might be trouble for a pair. It's kind of what you're here for. That's why it's a rose. You should be grateful that Akakusa-sensei prepared it for you. That's the point—"***

My phone rang. It's from Makoto.

I answer the phone.

***"It's Sui."***

***"It's suddenly bad! Are you at school right now?"***

***"I am."***

***"Help me! Can you come to the gym right now?"***

***"Well, that's pretty sudden. What's going on? If it's terrorism, call SAT. If the SATs don't work, try the Central Readiness Group Special Operations Group. Or is this going to be solved by a homecoming crew going there first?"***

***"The tennis club and the badminton club are fighting over the gym. Shirona-chan and the girls in my badminton group are getting***

***heated. I want Sui to come over here because it looks rough. You can at least get in between the two, right?"***

Shirona was the type of person who spoke cannot speak strongly. She has a personality that looks down and endures. I'm not sure how to describe it, but I can't express it at all. I wanted to obediently help.

***"All right. I'm on my way."***

***"Thank you! Please hurry!"***

I hang up the call and immediately got up. It was time for an American-like execution of justice.

***"I'm going to the gym."***

***"I see."***

***"Are you coming?"***

***"No."***

She was only following the book throughout. It must be something that Arina, who would hate trouble, would not want to hear. I didn't dare speak and left the ***"Rose Garden"***.

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# Vol.1 Chapter 7

Source: Airus Translations

REPORT

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Title: A Gymnasium Where The Voices Fly Around

When I arrived at the gym, the girls from the badminton team and the tennis team were arguing with each other.

They drew a line and separated both teams as if there was a crack in the ground. The guys seemed to be doing their best to calm them down.

It was hard to tell which side was the badminton team and which side was the tennis team, so I judged the side with Shirona to be the tennis club.

Shirona smiled like a flower in full bloom as soon as she saw me. I couldn't understand the situation so I asked her as she came over to me.

***"What are you guys fighting about?"***

***"Well, you see, on rainy days they promised to let the tennis club use a part of the gymnasium too, but the badminton club started telling us that that we were gonna stop doing that. But that's what the seniors who were here last year decided, so I don't know if it's any of our business anymore or what..."***

What is this girl saying? I don't know either...

Makoto was on the badminton club side. He seemed to be struggling to diffuse the girls' anger, but he was completely ignored. The power and power balance within the club was roughly estimated.

The main focus of the argument is on the sophomores. The current high school seniors retired after the summer games, so there were only high school sophomores and freshmen now, so I could see a few familiar faces here and there.

***"Ah, that's Hiiragi Yuri, if I recall. A friend of Shirona's."***

***"Un. Yuri is frustrated too..."***

***"Ok. Let's see if we can get a word in."***

I plunged into the crowd and observed the argument. ***[T/N: Raws say 'human mass']***

***"So that was the decision of the graduating seniors, right? So why can't we change it?"***

***"But all this time you've been lending us the gym on rainy days, and now it's all gone? Isn't that weird?"***

***"We have a lot of members in our club. It's just that we share the gym with the basketball team, and if any more space is taken up, we won't be able to practice, either. It's been a long time coming, but on a rainy day, why don't you at least do some muscle training?"***

***"Yeah, yeah. We have a game coming up. Can't you deal with it?"***

***“We have our own games too. You’re going back on your word!”***

I was overwhelmed by the girls' relentless arguing. At first glance, they seemed to be interacting civilly, but sparks were flying between them. It's like an act. Let's call the SDF.

Bottom line, they need me, don't they?

It's like I'm here for Shirona but she was out of the argument and right next to me. I can say that what Makoto asked me to do is over. The only thing left to do is to put an end to this argument, but it doesn't have to be me, does it? I was a complete outsider. I thought that it would be like adding fuel to the fire.

***“What can we do to fix this?”***

***“I don’t know. I think the tennis team is the more pathetic of the two, but I get what they mean. Personally, I don’t think the tennis team is in the wrong. But it’s better to sit down and talk about things. If you stick your hand out, it’s going to get you trouble.”***

The girls' arguments became more and more heated while they were talking. They were screaming like cats threatening each other, mouths agape and gasping. ***[T/N: Women are cats. Ow, my girlfriend just smacked me. I demand justice.]***

I decided to try to talk with Yuri. I crossed my arms and approached behind her as she went head-to-head with the badminton club. The girl's were wary of me. I didn't care though, this one had a history of fighting in the bread section of the concession stand.

***"Yuri, you look busy."***

***"Etto.. Shirona's boyfriend?"***

***“No, that’s wrong. You’re going to Venus. I’m on your side.” [T/N: Not sure what he means □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□]***

***“You’re appealing to Shirona at this time? That’s amazing.”***

It seems that I needed to use a language other than Japanese to talk with Yuri. The best thing to do is to quote words from Swahili, probably. ***[T/N: A Bantu language widely used as a lingua franca in East Africa and having official status in several countries.]***

I decided that it was impossible to communicate with Yuri and turned my attention to the girls from the badminton club. They glared at me with hatred of avenging their parents. It's suffocating me.

***“Hey, just let the tennis club borrow it today. It’s unreasonable to go back on a promise without notice if you’ve made it in the past.”***

***"It's not your problem."***

***“Hey, hey, if you didn’t listen to anyone but the parties involved, judges wouldn’t exist in the world. You need an objective point of view. Keep your head down.”***

***"Why don't you just quibble on your own? We don't need you. We're talking to the badminton club. What club are you in?"***

***"The Going Home club."***

*"Pfft."*

You've got some nerve laughing at the Going Home club.  
You've just made enemies with all of the Going Home clubs in the country.  
We are an unaffiliated, 'unorganized club', what we call a 'border-less club'.  
I applaud you for speaking out against this noble body of concepts. Imagine.  
Imagine all the Going Home clubs in the country running as fast as they can  
toward you like a flood.  
It would be the end of the world.

***"What are you smiling at...?"***

I'm sorry that you're offended by me going home, but I'm offended by you  
antagonizing the Going Home club. We have nothing to lose. You might as  
well give up. The difference between us is huge.  
You're not going to be able to find out what's going on. Sui has done it  
again. Aren't you angry when someone insults your club? What? The Going  
Home club isn't a club? I'm sending you to Siberia.

***"You're wasting your precious after-school time, you guys. Back off  
today and just let the tennis team have some of the gym for  
themselves."***

***"Shut up. It's none of your business."***

All right. Now let's talk in Morse code. I'll remember you, badminton club.  
Just as I thought it was too late, a woman with long hair appeared between  
the tennis team and the badminton club.  
Looking back at us, facing the badminton section, the woman, with her arms  
crossed and her legs wide across her shoulders, standing upright, was Arina  
Hiwa.

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# Chapter 8

Source: Airus Translations

REPORT

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Title: The Visit of Cold Air

The unexpected turn of events froze not only me, but everyone in the room. Everyone closed their mouths and waited with baited breath to see what she would say. Like people waiting for Hitler's speech.

A few members of the basketball team practicing also had their gazes glued to us. There was a strange atmosphere, and Arina took a breath and finally cut in.

***"You guys, are you animals who can't even keep a single promise?"***

Arina said coldly.

The sharp tone of her voice rang in my ears.

They all froze at her words. They didn't know how to react to her relentless statement. And why would she be here to reprimand them? Why did she willingly cut in? No one knew.

Both the badminton club, which was being opposed by her, and the tennis club, who she was supporting, were confused.

***"Do you hear me? I don't think I'm shouting loud enough that I'm going to break eardrums. It's a one-sided and unfair demand from the badminton club, no matter how you see it. Can't you understand that, even though you're in high school?"***

She always ends her sentence with a provocation. It's a tone that's very much like her.

One of the girls from the badminton club opens her mouth.

***"Again, it's none of your business."***

***"That again? Earlier, the mitochondria behind you said something about a judge or something, and he's right. Reconsider what you're saying from the perspective of a third party for once. Be aware that you're yelling like a self-centered, cheeky, and whiny child. In the first place, you're treating you're senior's promises as if they're rotten. I wonder what your seniors would think if they saw you."***

***[T/N: Mitochondria as an insult is new.]***

***"You don't have to explain that to me—"***

***"This is hard to listen to. I think the seniors from the tennis club would feel betrayed if I told them. That the petty juniors from the badminton club were being hard on their juniors. You don't want to be bothered by your seniors feeling sorry for you like that, do you? Right, Yuri-san?"***

***"Eh? Oh, I can't be bothered with seniors."***

Yuri was upset for a moment when she was suddenly talked down to.

***"If you still want to have a barren argument, it's a pain, but I'll call you and the other seniors of the badminton club. What do you think?"***

The girls at the head of the badminton club flinched at Arina's almost threatening words. I couldn't see it, but I'm sure Arina's face was colder and more frozen than the Ice Age. Mammoths would be surprised. If you don't pour some boiling water on it soon, the girl at the front of the group is going to cry.

I decided it was time for me to go. What Arina had to say is the most valid, but she's not the one who should be saying that. As much as I admire her, being here any longer would only serve to distract from the point of the conversation. She's not wrong by any means, but I'm not sure it was the right time.

***"Arina, let's go."***

I whispered that. I fixed my face without twitching my ears.

A few seconds of silence passes.

***"Come on, let's go."***

For the second time, Arina finally moved. Without saying anything, she turned her body towards the gym exit. That's where I saw Arina's profile. She still had the same cold expression on her face. Maybe it was my imagination, but she seemed to feel alive. I'm sure I was confused too.

***"Yuri, sorry for disturbing you. I'll apologize later."***

Yuri nodded awkwardly.

I followed Arina out of the gym. Until the end, the two parties stared at us as we walked away, looking like they'd just seen a UFO.

I don't know what happened after that.

Arina moved forward silently and left.

I didn't call out to her, but I saw her off. My gut was telling me not to follow her.

I went back to the Rose Garden alone and thought back to the flow of events that had just taken place.

It was still a mystery why Arina showed up. Did she follow me because I went to the gym? Or was it because she was curious about the tennis club? But that's unlikely, given Arina's personality.

The fact that Arina, who hated trouble more than anything else, went out of her way to intervene. The fact that this is the case made it all the more troubling to me.

***"I don't get it."***

I left school without clearing the haze in my mind.

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# Chapter 9

Source: Airus Translations

[REPORT](#)

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Title: Preserved Flower

School after the holidays is killing me.

I wish with all my heart that school would be closed due to some terrorist attack or natural disaster. Yes, it's a peace-loving kind of thing. Let's say what I just said was a joke because it's inappropriate.

However, all Japanese people must hate Mondays. The faces of the working adults that come and go look asleep or dead. I became into a zombie and joined the March of the Dead.

As soon as I walked into the classroom and took my seat, Makoto came over.

***"Good morning, Sui."***

***"Uh-huh."***

***"I'm sorry if you had a bad Friday. Sorry for bothering you."***

***"Don't apologize. I got to see something interesting."***

Something interesting. That was Arina. That rare drama that turned the atmosphere upside down was really interesting. Don't tell anyone that I muttered to myself, ***"Drama? If Arina asked me about it, I'd be afraid."***

***"So what happened after? How did the badminton and tennis teams end up?"***

***"We split up for about five minutes, and then we talked it over calmly once everyone settled down. We decided to share the place with the tennis club like we have been. I'm seriously glad. I was cringing because I thought we were gonna have another heated argument..."***

***"Are you all in the clear?"***

***"As a matter of fact, I heard that the badminton and tennis teams are having their last meeting today, so they'll decide everything there."***

***"Oh. Good, good."***

If that argument won't happen again, I'll have no complaints.

***"But,"***

***"What?"***

***"I was surprised that Hiwa came.... I didn't understand what was happening at first."***

***"Certainly not what I expected."***

***"As I thought, Hiwa and Sui..."***

***"Why is that?"***

***"I can't help it! What's the real story!? I won't tell anyone!"***

***"Makoto, I'm really not dating anyone but don't say too much, okay? Arina might get pissed off and my life might be in danger.... in fact, she almost killed me."***

***"Shit. This bothers me so much."***

***"Let me give it to you straight. I'm not dating Arina."***

***"...Well, I'll give it a break for today."***

What, you're gonna keep doing this in the future?

A dinner party with Makoto.

***"Well, it's a dinner party."***

***"Sui, stop saying that every time we eat. It's embarrassing."***

***"What? It's a noble dinner party. Is there a chef?"***

***"The chef is Sui's mother..."***

***"No, it might be my sister."***

***"Ah, ummm, 'Ugin'-chan, right?"***

***"Yep. Ugin Sakaki is my sister's name. What's your name?"***

***"Takane Makoto... I just want to say..."***

***"Hai, itadakimasu."***

***"Itadakimasu."***

Then, as I was silently eating my made-in-Sakaki meal, Yuri Hiiragi burst into the classroom. As soon as she saw me, she approached me.

***"Thanks for the help."***

***"I didn't do anything. You can thank Arina instead. That was all Arina."***

***"I did already, though~. The only reply I got was 'I see'."***

***"That's just like her."***

***"So you're going out with Arina after all? What's up with that!?"***

***"Wait, no! I'm not going out with anybody! I'm about to throw a sausage!"***

***"Mou, you're so stubborn. Who do you want, Arina or Shirona?! Be clear!"***

***"Shirona has nothing to do with it either! My female relationships are super healthy!"***

***"Sui, don't do that with Hiwa, you'll die..."***

***"Been there, done that. Don't worry, I won't be confessing to Arina like you did. You'll be the only one who dies."***

***"Kuhn, it hurts..."***

Makoto was starting to turn pale. He was probably having flashbacks. Don't let your PTSD develop here.

***"I'm grateful that Sui brought Arina with so. Thank you. We'll take care of the rest."***

***"I don't know about that either. Play nice, club president."***

Class was over and I headed to the Rose Garden, as usual. Arina hadn't come yet.

If she didn't come, this place would have no reason to exist.

I wonder how Akakusa-sensei managed to secure this place.

***"I'll clean up..."***

The environment was still not perfect, so I picked up my broom and started sweeping. I opened the window and let the air out. Awful air. I opened the door to let more air in.

***"Uwa—"***

***"Get out of my way."***

Arina was standing in front of the door. She looked up at me slightly and I was a little frightened.

She walked by quickly and put her bag on the long desk with a thud. Each movement was a bit erratic. ***"Keep it quieter,"*** I swallowed my words as they started to come out and focused on the large paper bag in Arina's right hand.

***"Arina, what's that? It's so big."***

***"It has your head inside. It's fresh."***

***"What? Isn't that wrong? No way, I didn't think my brain was going to become a machine before I knew it—"***

***"No, it's not. It's no better than a cabbage."***

She has a hobby of hurting me with harsh words. I think cabbage is pretty important, though. Is she trying to tell me that he brought me up as a comparison object, that Sakaki Sui is a worthy being? You're praising me under the guise of undermining me? You tsundere. But I'm sure all the housewives in the world would choose the cabbage, no questions asked, if they had to choose between my life and all the cabbages in the world. It's so sad. This is reality. Human life seems to be worth less than cabbage.

Arina put her hand in the paper bag and took it out.

***"Oh my god. A blue rose."***

There were many blue-dyed roses. She took out a bouquet of flowers. She placed it in a small vase and gently placed the vase on the long table.

***"How often do roses need to be watered?"***

***"These roses don't need water."***

***"They're gonna die."***

***"Do you know what preserved flowers are?"***

***"Nope."***

***"It's a dehydrated and processed flower. They're dead."***

***"Huh, was there always such a thing?"***

***"My mother gave them to me because she makes preserved flowers as a hobby. So I thought I'd bring them into this tasteless room."***

Arina said and stared lovingly at the roses. She always wrinkles her brow, so this was an unexpected side of her. It's weird to see her smiling. I'll be careful not to talk about this, because if I do, I won't be able to escape her punishment.

***"Arina. Why did you come at that moment?"***

Of course, I was talking about when she showed up at the gym.

***"Use that brain of yours, that's no bigger than a walnut, to think."***

I didn't expect to get an answer from the start, so her reply was to be expected. Society isn't kind enough to give us easy answers. I stopped asking because Arina seemed to be enjoying arranging the blue roses. Arina in a good mood made for a nice scene.

***"That said,"***

***"What?"***

***"Why are people saying we're dating? I'm about to run out of patience."***

***"It's a problem for me too. Let's just calm down and figure it out. Don't kill me."***

***"No, but I can hear it all around me. You're going to have to do something, or I'm going to erase your name off the records."***

What kind of state power does this woman have?

It was a problem for me as well, so I'm going to clear up the misunderstanding. It's going to take some time, but it's better to do it quietly. That was going to be better than saying it loudly and standing out.

***"But the fact that I'm dating the beautiful Arina Hiwa is something to be proud of."***

***"Give me your hand. I'm gonna rip all of your nails off."***

I ran into the men's room. Seeing Arina walk away in frustration gave me the best feeling of superiority I'd had in the long time.

T/N: You're playing a dangerous game, Sui.

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# Chapter 10

Source: Airus Translations

[REPORT](#)

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Title: The Person Who Knew The Rose

Today I was going to help out the art club.

I heard that the art club sometimes does portraits as part of their club activities, and today the girl who was going to be their model stayed home with a cold. This caught my ear and I told the art club I would help out and bring a beautiful woman with me.

The head of the art club, Miyazaki Shinji, gladly agreed and asked me to come to the art room after school.

At our base, the rose garden.

***"Hello!"***

Arina was already in the Rose Garden. I greeted her cheerfully, but she didn't give me a second glance and continued reading. Since she didn't even respond, I began to doubt my own existence. Don't tell me I'm already dead...?

***"Oh, there are more flowers."***

On the long table there was a new small vase of flowers.

***"Was it blizzard flower...?"***

***"It's preserved flowers."***

***"Oh, that's it. What kind of flower is that."***

***"Helichrysum."***

***"Heh~..."***

It was the first time in my life I had ever heard such a word. I don't know much about flowers, so I didn't understand at all.

But the beauty of flowers you can enjoy without knowledge. It's an art that everyone can enjoy.

***"Arina, we're going to the art room today."***

***"What will I be doing?"***

"You just have to read. There's no easier job than this.

***"All right. You're paying me."***

***"No, this is a free service—"***

***"Let's go."***

With a paperback book in hand, Arina went towards the door of the Rose Garden. I don't even know if she's motivated or not anymore. I think she's more grown up than when we first met, though.

As soon as they arrived at the art room, the club members became nervous.

Arina went into the art room, looking like a person who could destroy a dojo. Naturally, I chased after her. When the art club members saw me, their faces changed to a questioning look. That's right, I'm the bad guy. To explain the situation, I immediately approached Miyazaki Shinji.

***"Thaanks, Sui. You came. Um, is she the model or...?"***

***"Yes. She's a tsundere high school girl named Hiwa Arina. I think she'd make a great model. Gwah—!"***

I screamed out as a sharp pain shot through my side. I turned my head to look behind me and saw Arina. She was holding a mechanical pencil in her right hand. The tip of the pencil was digging into my side. She just like a yandere who just stabbed a two-timing bastard with a knife. No, I stabbed her, which made me a murderer. Yep, I'm gonna die.

***"Shinji, this is Hiwa Arina."***

I felt bad for Shinji, so I turned around and spoke to Arina in a whisper.

***"Arina, just read your book. The art club is in need of a model right now, and I chose you in an emergency. It's not like you're going to be nude or anything—"***

I was hit in the belly. The position of my gallbladder was displaced by about 10 cm.

***"...Please just read. That's all I need you to do..."***

***"I see. Then no problem."***

I turned back to Shinji, clutching my side and stomach.

***"All right. You can start."***

***"Oh, thank you. Nice seeing you today, Arina-san."***

Arina nodded without looking up.

The time to draw Arina began.

She sat down in a chair and began to read the paperback book with good posture and dexterously flipped the pages as she got into her reading. Instead of turning it up, she rolled it with her thumb. She seems to be doing her best.

I didn't have anything to do, so I just hung out and observed how they were drawing. Since I didn't have any taste in drawing, I was overwhelmed by the skills of the art club who were smoothly drawing on white paper. As my eyes followed the lines that gradually took shape without hesitation, I realized that each member of the club had his or her own style. I noticed the density of the lines, the strength of the shadows, and the smoothness of the curves. As an amateur, it's hard for me to express, but each member's personality is imbued into the picture, and there were many different kinds of Arinas.

Arina continued to be their model. I left the art room, thinking I would at least buy her a drink.

I arrived at the vending machine, but I stood there wondering what Arina liked to drink. Coffee? Green tea? Monster? Tuermeric? Clam juice? Sesame oil? Cement? Mercury? Hmmm, it's hard to decide. I think she'll drink anything.

As I groaned, I heard a voice calling me.

***"Sui, right? Hi!"***

***"It's Aki-senpai, isn't it? It's been a while. We go to the same school, but we don't see each other often."***

I met Aki-senpai when I was a freshman on the health committee. Perhaps we were on the same wavelength or frequency, but Aki-senpai was frequently involved with me. She was an interesting person who never got bored and was also talkative.

***"What's up? You're staring at the vending machine. You were thinking about how to get free drinks or something, weren't you?"***

***"It's a shame. I was just trying to figure out how to get the vending machine to spit out all the change and bills it swallowed."***

***"That sucks. Let me know if you have any ideas. I'll try every ATM in town."***

***"Shall we go to the dark side together—"***

As usual she's an interesting person. Aki-senpai often makes jokes and I never get what she's thinking. That's why our wavelengths match.

***"So, what are you really doing? I've been looking at Sui since I found you, but you seemed pretty distressed. I wasn't sure if I should talk to you."***

***"It's not that big of a deal. I was going to buy someone a drink, but her tastes are mysterious to me now that I think about it... she's the kind of person makes a lot of sense when she says something, so I'm being careful."***

***"Heh~. Is that girl Arina-chan?"***

***"Eh? Aki-senpai, are you a psychic?"***

***"Isn't it great~? I can crush all kinds of things without touching them~."***

She poked me in the neck. Compared to the pain of being stabbed by a mechanical pencil a few minutes ago, it was so gentle. It felt like pudding. I suppressed my bliss.

***"How does senpai know Arina?"***

***"I went to junior high with Arina-chan and we talked occasionally. I found Arina-chan right away because she stood out among the freshman in high school. Arina-chan is so cute."***

***"I see. So Arina talks to people too, huh?"***

***"What do you mean by that? Aren't you close with Arina-chan?"***

Close, huh?

***"Arina-chan didn't join a club, did she?"***

***"Was Arina in a club in junior high?"***

***"I was on the basketball team. It's indoor and outdoor, so we didn't meet through a club, but I met Arina-chan on the library committee."***

***"Oh, don't tell me, did Aki-senpai play soft tennis in junior high too?"***

***“I didn’t want to quit after junior high, so I continued in high school. Our last tournament in the summer ended with mediocre results, but it was fun.”***

I see. I think I’m beginning to understand why Arina knows so much about soft tennis.

I would feel bad for Arina if I pried any further, so I decided to stop talking about her.

***“Good luck on your exams, Aki-senpai. I’m looking forward to seeing you shine in soft tennis at university.”***

***“You’re such a good boy! Sui! It makes me cry!”***

I bought a tomato juice for myself, and after much deliberation, I decided to get Arina a cup of coffee. ***[T/N: Aren’t they in cans...?]***

***“Wait a sec. This is good.”***

Stopping my hand, Aki-senpai pushed the milk cocoa.

***“This is the right answer.”***

Seemingly satisfied, Aki-senpai left. It was the same uniqueness. It was a shame that Arina could make the boys more crazy about her if she had that same kind of element. She didn’t seem to want that, though.

T/N: The raws don’t make it clear on Aki-senpai’s gender, so based on how Aki talks and acts, I’m assuming she’s a girl. The raws only refer to Aki as ***“ano hito”***, meaning person in English. It doesn’t help that Aki is also a gender neutral name. If Aki’s gender is revealed to be male, which would frankly be surprising to me, I’ll go back and change the pronouns.

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# Chapter 11

Source: Airus Translations

[REPORT](#)

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T/N: This was pretty damn time consuming to TL. Enjoy the read~

Title: Studying

I grabbed the drink I bought and returned to the art room.

They seemed to still be drawing. Arina didn't seem to be tired of sitting at all, but rather focused on her book. Since she didn't move even slightly, the drawings of Arina were in the exact same position of the actual Arina.

A short time later, they took a break. Arina also got up and took a break.

I handed the cocoa I bought earlier to Arina, who was staring out of the window in a daze.

***"Good work. Bought you a drink."***

Rolling her eyes, Arina took it with both hands.

***"What's wrong?"***

***"...I feel like someone used to give me the same cocoa once upon a time."***

You really do know Aki-senpai, don't you, Arina?

The way she said 'once upon a time' struck me. Didn't Arina see Aki-senpai when she entered high school? I don't mean to unnecessarily intrude on her relationships, but I'm curious. Are they in a fight?

I sipped my tomato juice, since I was a health-conscious person, and Arina continued reading while sipping her cocoa.

The break must've been almost over, since Shinji approached us.

***"Thank you, Arina-san. We'll finish up soon."***

***"Yes."***

She picked up her paperback book again and went to sit in her chair.

I drank my tomato juice and think about it. How did Arina come to avoid getting involved with people and make rude comments? Or was she like that from the start? Even though Aki-senpai only told me a little, junior high Arina seemed to have had a normal school life.

From the way Arina talks, she may not know that Aki-senpai goes to this high school. Aki-senpai herself says she doesn't talk to Arina either. Then the only thing I can think of is that something happened in middle school.

There seems to be a deeper mystery about Arina.

***"Stuffing something in your head is going to cost you something, isn't it?"***

I muttered in the Rose Garden. I wasn't talking to myself. Of course, there's another schoolgirl here.

***"I think it would be zero if you add everything in the world. If someone laughs, someone cries. When someone goes up, someone else goes down. I think it would be canceled out."***

Arina was quietly studying next to me.

***"You know, studying is definitely going to shorten your life span."***

***"Shut up. I'm going to stick a mechanical pencil in your ear."***

Midterms were coming up.

High school tests are quite important. They're very important for special programs, scholarships, and recommended entrance exams. If you take them for granted, you'll regret it. However, most students don't do it because it's just too much trouble. It's just too much trouble. Whether you do it or not, your future self will either hate or admire the past. It comes down to one of two things.

I'm someone who wants to have the last laugh, so I asked Arina to teach me. Of course, Arina didn't want to teach me anything and quietly studied on her own.

***"I'll stop supporting club until after midterms. I've got a lot of studying to do."***

***"Yeah."***

It's unfortunate that me and Akakusa-sensei's intentions will hurt Arina's grades, who always maintains a top 10 ranking. I don't want to give her a bad aftertaste. This club is for Arina, in a roundabout way. It's something that doesn't exist on paper.

***"Arina."***

***"..."***

***"Arina-san."***

***"..."***

***"Arina-chan."***

***"..."***

***"Ari."***

***"Shut up, you cancer cell."***

***"Have you ever taught someone?"***

***"...Never."***

***"Help me a bit. I'm doing English right now, and I was wondering if there's any way to learn words more efficiently?"***

***"I have nothing to teach you."***

***"No, you do. My sister will be happy."***

***"So you have a sister..."***

***"What's the matter? Why are you rubbing your temples?"***

***"I feel sorry that she has you as a brother..."***

I was hurt a little.

***"So, tell me. English. I'm not very good at English. Help me, Lady Arina. You're my only ray of hope."***

***"Read it aloud. You'll remember if you say 'au au'."***

***"Auuuu."***

***"I'm opening a window. I'll leave it open. Feel free to jump out at any time."***

***"All right, all right. I'm sorry."***

After that, I studied diligently as well. Arina didn't touch the paperback book either, but just ran her pen over it.

Today's after-school session ended with a little cursing and silence.

Tests were coming up, and here and there some people were studying in the classroom during break. I've been busy with wordbooks, calculations, and various other things.

My grades generally ranked in the middle, a little higher than average.

I wanted to get high grades, so I had been studying hard at home. I had time, so I found the way to study that suited me, which was the most important part.

***"Makoto, what are your grades like?"***

***"Normal."***

***"I see. That answer is too normal to say anything about it."***

***"It's normal! They're not particularly noteworthy or terrible. It's going to be like that again this time."***

***"Everyone is worried."***

***"Yeah."***

At lunch, after the dinner part with Makoto, I went to the library. I went there expecting Arina to be there, but unusually, she was absent. I looked into Arina's classroom and she wasn't there, and I almost went into the girl's bathroom next but came up with the possibility of the Rose Garden.

I visited the Rose Garden and sure enough, Arina was studying there.

***"It's already pushing it seeing your face after school. When are you going to get plastic surgery?"***

***"You're too harsh right off the bat. Are you studying?"***

***"Yeah."***

I was wrong about one thing.

I thought that people with outstanding grades were geniuses, so they didn't study that much. Arina's always been in the top 10, so I thought she was the same, but I was just being shallow. Someone who doesn't run away from studying and does it is the one who excels.

I hate it, but I have to do it. I subconsciously looked for excuses or made up reasons why I couldn't study and convinced myself that I can't. I'm like that, and most people are the same. I don't know how to study or how to be more efficient. I've never done it. I won't make any progress while lazing around trying to have fun.

Arina wasn't running away, she's competing for the top.

***"I have to do it, right?"***

***"If you're going to jump, you better hurry up."***

***"I'm not trying to die. I'll study as well."***

***"I see."***

I sat down with Arina and studied during my lunch break.

Even after school, she was still studying. I followed her example and did some English, which I'm not very good at, since it's hard to get into my head. When I was thinking of a better way to study, I remembered something Arina once said to me.

***"Does speaking English help you learn?"***

***"Wow. Why is there a dead frog beside me... really..."***

***"It's homosapien. You told me before, I should speak."***

***"Yes."***

***"Did I do it right? Are you serious?"***

***"I'm serious."***

***"Explain it to me. Why is it good to speak aloud?"***

Arina looked very tired.

***"Please. Our Lady Arina."***

***"Huh. I'll only say it once. Then you can study."***

***"Yes, ma'am."***

***"The reason Japanese people can't remember English words or understand the grammatical structure is simply because of the way they grasp the meaning of Japanese. English is different."***

***"Oh."***

***"The letters that English uses is the alphabet. The letters of the alphabet are used in English to represent words, and they're classified as 'phonetic' letters. And alphabetical letters are classified as 'phonetic' characters."***

It was the first time I heard that word.

***"The words 'phonetic alphabet' means 'a character that expresses a sound', as the kanji character 'phonetic' means. The characteristic of the phonetic alphabet is that you can pronounce the word just by looking at it. It may seem like an ordinary thing, but it's very convenient. You can pronounce even long words that you've never seen before without any effort."***

Arina pointed to my English textbook.

***"Even this word can be pronounced without knowing what it means. That's the advantage of phonetic symbols, and that's their best part."***

***"Oh."***

"Then there's Japanese. Japanese is a language that utilizes three types of characters, hiragana and katakana, which are phonetic symbols, and then kanji. The hiragana and katakana are phonetic symbols that, like the letters of the alphabet, don't have a single meaning.

But kanji is different. Kanji characters are called ideograph, which is 'a character that expresses meaning'. You can understand the meaning of kanji just by looking at it, even if you can't read it. It's a long list of kanji, and even if you don't know how to pronounce it correctly, you can still understand it's meaning by looking at it.

I said phonetic symbols earlier, but you couldn't get the meaning of 'hyōnmoji' from the sound alone, could you? There were too many homonyms, so there were too many candidates for the kanji to be applied, and we couldn't find the right one with just one word. That's why we were made to study kanji in elementary school by writing them down. Because the best way to learn kanji is to learn it visually. There isn't much emphasis on the sound."

**[T/N: hyōnmoji, or ひょうもじ, translates to phonetic alphabet. And in case you aren't familiar with these terms, homonyms are words that have the same pronunciation but different meanings, and ideograph/ideogram is a character symbolizing the idea of a thing without indicating the sounds used to say it.]**

Arina continued to talk after a short pause.

***"I haven't talked about the disadvantage of English. English doesn't have the benefits of kanji. That is, when you see a word for the first time, you can't get the meaning of it. Kanji and English are opposites. Of course, spelling is important, but sounds are far more important in this language. There are not so many homophones in English as there are in Japanese. That means there aren't many different meanings on the same pronunciation. Ba-si-ca-lly."***

***"Yes."***

"When you learn English, you have to link the sounds to the meaning. You don't have to write down much. You have to pronounce a small sentence over and over and put it in your head. You need to understand the meaning of the sentence.

If you come across a word you've seen before, but can't remember its meaning, try to pronounce it in your head. This will help you remember the sentence you've said over and over again that contains the word. Once you've memorized the meaning of the sentence, you can compare the translated sentence with the part of the sentence that corresponds to the English word, and then you can finally remember the meaning of the forgotten word. That's how you should study English, and if you talk to others, your English will improve."

***"Now that I think about it, English and Japanese are very different."***

"Haaa. People often make fun of Japanese people for not being able to speak English, but there's hardly any other country that requires them to speak a foreign language, so they don't need to. It's more embarrassing to not be able to speak your native language. So there's no need to feel inferior.

I think that not only Japan, but also other countries, should love their own language more. There's not much demand for English in Japan, but I think the main reason is the way we teach people. As I said before, in Japan, they only make you write words over and over again instead of making you pronounce them. If you make a small grammatical mistake, you get zero points. One of the reasons they can't speak is because they are grammar-

phobic. It's a very effective way to learn kanji, but it's not very efficient for English. If you understand the difference between Japanese and English, anyone can improve his or her English grade. Do you understand?"

I nodded. I was stunned by Arina's explanation. I had never done, heard, or thought about her analysis of the English language. A new concept arose, and it felt fresh.

In other words, Arina is a shrewd one.

***"That was very informative. It's been a real eye-opener."***

***"I see. Study hard."***

***"Yes ma'am."***

I fell into a state of dismay. She was too awesome. I didn't know that there was a high schooler who had the kind of knowledge and thinking that would make me feel so drawn to her. If I had a problem with this kind of speech, I would have laughed and brushed it aside, but for me, it was an 'interesting story' that aroused my curiosity.

I'd like to hear more. I really wanted to, but it would interfere with Arina's studies, so I gave up on it.

One day, I hope I can do the same thing.

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# Chapter 12

Source: Airus Translations

[REPORT](#)

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Title: Water, Soil, and Pots.

As a result, my English scores improved from last year.

Other subjects were so-so, but I'm proud of my English performance.

I can't help but be impressed by the change with just one way of studying. I've always had a vague way of thinking. I'd like to thank Arina for helping me out.

The hallway was buzzing with activity, so I was curious and looked at the grades posted.

The top 20 students were listed in order of academic excellence, and Arina was fourth. How smart is she?

In first place was Futawatari.

Futawatari was famous for being a mysterious woman. Arina was famous in a bad way, but Futawatari was known for her talent. The name itself has an old-fashioned feel to it, but Futawatari was more like a natural gyaru. I don't know anything about gyaru, so I don't understand.

***[T/N: A gyaru is basically the equivalent of a gal]***

I had never talked to her.

Bottom line, it was none of my business.

I used my lunch break to visit Akakusa-sensei.

I'll say it again, Akakusa-sensei is beautiful. Not only is she popular among the teachers, but also among the male students.

***"Hello, sensei."***

***"Ara, what's up, Sui?"***

Your beautiful voice makes me thrilled!

***"I'm here about Arina."***

***"I see. Have you noticed any changes with her?"***

***"Yes, I can't help but feel that things have changed somewhat. At first, she rejected me again and again, but recently the amount of times I've been able to have a decent conversation with her has increased. Surprisingly, she doesn't talk much, does she?"***

***"Yes. It's good to hear that you've made progress. Keep up the good work."***

***"Of course. Ah, but sensei."***

***"What?"***

I asked the question I'd always wondered about.

***"Can you tell me when and under what conditions that this activity will no longer be needed?"***

I wanted to ask her this.

I don't know where this was going to end. I mean, ***"rehabilitate Arina"*** was an abstract mission. This will eventually lead to negligence and confusion for Arina. She won't even be able to answer the question of why she's here.

If you don't establish a solid plan at all costs, it will eventually collapse. A typical club activity has competition and other goals set, and it has a realistic sense of purpose.

Maybe what we're doing is just passing time. We may be leaving our original purpose of existence behind. I can't help but feel that we're only gathering for 'something'.

***"Honestly, I was just going to use my own judgement..."***

***"That would be a problem. Without a clear goal I may continue to do useless things with Arina without her realizing it. I don't want that to happen, and I don't want to waste her time either."***

I regretted saying that a little too strongly. Akakusa-sensei is looking troubled!! What have I done...

***"I'm sorry. My request is for Arina-san to develop a friendship with you."***

Nope.

That's like telling me to be arrogant and selfish. I don't want to stir up people's relationships, and it's silly to let them do that when they don't want to.

It's annoying to say, ***"You don't have any friends, let's make them."***

Arina would feel even more so.

Why should I be pitied, you say. It's too arrogant to treat people like that.

***"Sensei, I don't agree with you on that. Or are you trying to indirectly communicate something to me?"***

Sensei flushed out a vague ***"no"***. There was definitely something going on.

I want to get to the hear tof it. I'm sure that's the big problem she's facing.

But I also know that it's not an area that I can easily step into.

I have no right to do so. I've known that from the beginning.

***"Okay. I'll support Arina any way I can."***

***"Thank you. Really."***

When I returned to the classroom, I didn't know what was going on, but I realized that deep down, I felt defeated. It wasn't like I was competing against Akakusa-sensei, but I felt defeated.

I went to Makoto's seat.

***"Hey, Makoto. How would you feel if you said, 'I'll make you a friend' to someone who doesn't have any friends?"***

***"You're always sudden."***

***"Sorry. So, what do you think?"***

***"Wouldn't that make them feel bad? I feel like I'm just being disrespectful. That's justs my opinion. I'm sure there are some people who would accept it gratefully."***

***"Yep. I knew it."***

***"What is it?"***

***"Nothing. I was just wondering if I was sane."***

Makoto tilted his head. Well, it can't be helped. If I was told this kind of thing, I would think there was a hidden agenda.

Midterms are over, so we're back in action today, but I don't know if Arina will come. I have a feeling that she'll fade away after the midterms.

In that case, it would take some time to convince her, but I would like Arina to come by all means. But if she doesn't like it, it may be unnecessary. She would just feel annoyed rather than thankful.

After school, I stopped at the concession stand before going to the Rose Garden.

I had one thing in mind. Cream bread.

But as good as they are, of course they would be in high demand. Quickness is the key to victory. I knew this by heart, so I went there at lightning speed. But the store had already turned into a battlefield. The women's club members, who looked like soldiers jumping out of trenches and running for the enemy's heart, grabbed their money and lined up at the register. That's why Uncle Jam should quickly move on here. It's a lot better than making an Anko creature. ***[T/N: Once again, I have no idea what kind of reference this is, if someone knows, let me know, ]***

***]***

That's why I reached for it. I can no longer see the bread. I'm sure the girls would treat me like a molester. But I still fought. I wanted to get that bread. This is all I can do.

***"Hey, you!"***

I thought it was the police, because of the tone of voice, so I quickly pulled my hand back and stood upright.

A blushing schoolgirl stood in front of me.

***"Hey, you just touched me! Again!"***

***"What I touched was bread. It's a lump of carbohydrates that the Japanese love. I didn't do anything. It's true. I'm sorry."***

***"Well, it's fine if it wasn't intentional. Ah, it was you, Sakaki?"***

***"Eh?"***

***"I'm in the same class as you. Come to think of it, we've never talked."***

Futawatari, who was the smartest in our year, was there.

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# Chapter 13

Source: Airus Translations

[REPORT](#)

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Title: Returning the Favor

Futawatari Tsuru looks like a thin gal.

We were in the same class, but we had never talked to each other. It was since I thought we lived in different worlds, in terms of personality and grades.

***"Ah, come to think of it, we haven't talked yet."***

***"Yep. Nice to meet you."***

***"Oh."***

***"So, I wanna ask you something."***

***"What?"***

***"What kind of person is Arina-san?"***

***There have been too many sticks from the bushes these days. [T/N: I'm assuming he means there are too many of these types of questions]***

***"Just like people say. She's got a foul mouth."***

***"I know that. But I don't want to know what's on the surface. I want to know what's in the inside."***

***"What's in the inside? Wait a minute, why are you asking me that?"***

***"I mean, aren't you guys supposed to be together?"***

It's that again. I'm gonna need to do something about these false rumors or Arina is going to get really angry.

I've been slashed on my shin with a broom and stabbed in the side with a mechanical pencil, but I don't know what'll happen next time. She could split my skull open with a hammer.

***"First of all, I'm not dating anyone. Let me make this clear."***

***"I asked people who was close with Arina, your name often came up. So, what's up?"***

***"This information we're dealing with is too dangerous. Tell me why you want to know first."***

***"Mmmm, you're stubborn... she saved me once."***

***"Ooh."***

"It was the winter of my freshman year. I was shivering on my way to school in the cold. I fell on the smooth pavement, which was like a skating ring. I hurt my knee and couldn't stand up. My knee was bleeding and it hurt as if it was broken, you know. I tried to stand, but I couldn't, even though I was holding the guardrail.

Then a girl in the same uniform walked past me, and she squatted down with her back to me. She said, ***"Get on."*** and gave me a piggyback ride. I felt bad that she was carrying me and I didn't know her name, so I shut up. In the end, I didn't even thank her until we got to school."

***"Wow, that mysterious girl is pretty strong."***

***"So I spent the rest of the day looking for her at school. I could only recognize her by her back, and it sucked to look for someone in this school of nearly 700 students. I had half given up on it, but just the other day there was a rumor that you and Arina were dating, but I'd never seen anyone named Arina before. I noticed that she always had good grades and I was curious about her. And when I found her, everything matched."***

***"Arina, that is."***

***"Yeah. Absolutely. I'm sure it was Arina. But she had such a bad reputation, and there was a feeling that you weren't supposed to go near her, so I didn't talk to her for the longest time. And I still haven't. So I thought of looking for you, Sakaki Sui, a famous eccentric from my class, because you were rumored to be dating Hiwa Arina. I thought it would be a good opportunity, but I'd never talked to you before and I thought talking to you out of the blue would look weird, so again, I didn't talk."***

She seemed to be prickly on the outside, but inside she's the complete opposite. It was an interesting gap.

***"So you think right now is a good time to talk to me?"***

***"...Yes."***

***"Do you have time?"***

***"Why?"***

***"I'll be the link between you and Arina."***

***"Eh, that's so sudden!"***

***"You'll never get a chance like this again."***

***"Hmmm."***

She's troubled.

***"What are you doing? Are you trying to kidnap her?"***

Geez. This person.

Arina was looking at me and Tsuru with a quizzical expression. I bumped into her at the store. I'm not sure what to do, but the fact that she wandered in at this critical time when Tsuru was trying to decide what to do was pretty bad.

Tsuru seemed to have stopped thinking and fixed her eyes on the ground. I waved my hand in front of her, but she didn't respond.

The only thing I can do now is to take her with me.

***"Tsuru, let's go."***

***"You're really trying to kidnap her. An electric current should go into your brain. You'll die quickly that way."***

***"I wouldn't kidnap someone in a public place. Oh, but if you want to kidnap Akakusa-sensei, let me know. I'll help."***

***"Huh. I wonder if someone could take you to the junkyard as scrap metal."***

I pulled Tsuru by her hand and headed for the Rose Garden. Arina followed behind me.

When we got to the Rose Garden, I sat Tsuru down on a chair and began to bring her back to reality.

***"Heyy, Tsuru. Come back."***

***"Uwaaa~. Where am I?"***

***"In a former staff room. And she's Arina."***

Arina cocked her head and lowered her eyes. Apparently, it was a bow.

***"Ah, uwa, nice to meet you. I'm Futawatari Tsuru."***

***"Hiwa Arina."***

***"Hey, Arina. Talk some more. Would it kill you to speak a couple more words?"***

***"Shut up, cicada shells. Go be collected by elementary students."***

***"And this foul mouthed woman is Hiwa Arina. Disillusioning, right? She looks super awesome and pretty, but inside she's worse than a rotten apple. It's a neurotoxic apple that even the Wicked Witch would be appalled by."***

***"Um, sorry, what?"***

Tsuru became even more confused by the turn of events.

***"Ah-. Um, you're a close couple, aren't you?"***

This is bad. Let's calm Tsuru down.

Arina looks like she's getting grumpy. Let's chill.

After a small break, Tsuru finally grasped the situation.

She observed the preserved flowers closely, curious about them. Arina was reading as usual.

***"I see. So Sui is helping out Arina-san."***

***"Yeah. Akakusa-sensei asked me to do this. Only a few people know. it's not a club activity, and I'm not a volunteer, so I'm working unofficially. Tsuru, this is the first time I've explained the situation to anyone. Keep it a secret. I'd advise you to keep it to yourself, but if you reveal it, I'll die. I really will."***

***"Don't say that, it's okay- Don't say Sui is going to die..."***

***"By the way, Tsuru, you're the first person to enter this room besides Arina and I."***

***"Are we in a closed off area or...?"***

Tsuru looked around with an expression that didn't know whether to be dumbfounded or impressed. There was nothing in particular to look at, though. It's just the flowers Arina brought, a desk, and some chairs.

***"So, Tsuru. You're going to tell her, right?"***

***"...Yeah."***

Tsuru slowly stood up and stood in front of Arina.

Arina held a bookmark on her fingers and dexterously rotated it around as she continued to read. I opened some tomato juice as if I were watching a movie. I had a feeling I'll be able to observe some interesting interactions.

***"Um, Arina-san. I've always wanted to thank you."***

***"Why? I don't remember interacting with anyone. Aside from that rag in the corner drinking tomato juice."***

She was really mean.

***"But you know, you saved me once."***

***"Really? I don't remember. I don't know you, either."***

***"It was last winter. You were the one who carried me on your back last winter when I fell down on the way to school, weren't you, Arina-san?"***

Arina's eyes widened for a moment. With my sharp ears and eyes, I didn't miss it.

***"I'm not sure about that. It's not like me to help anyone."***

***"But I'll always remember you. your dark hair, your height, your voice. I was so happy. I wanted to repay you and I spent over six months looking for you at school. I thought you may have graduated, and I was about to give up, to be honest. But then I found out it was you recently and I just had to talk to you."***

***"You have the wrong person. You shouldn't be thanking me. I don't think the person who helped you is going to be happy."***

Arina said coldly. It was as if to cut her off.

She reached for her book again.

***"But... thank you."***

Tsuru muttered in a fading voice.

Arina didn't say a word. Her long eyelashes twitched, and it seemed like she was reading already.

Tsuru turned around back to me.

***"Sui. I'm sorry to be a bother. I have to get back to the student council."***

***"So Tsuru was in the student council."***

***"I'm the secretary. Thank you for your time. See you around."***

The usual silence descended on the Rose Garden.

Kang. I put the tomato juice on the desk and spoke to Arina.

***"Arina. You wouldn't make a good con artist."***

***"I'm not so sure about that."***

***"You shouldn't even play poker."***

***"I see."***

***"There it is. You're a sweetheart, aren't you?"***

***"Huh?"***

***"You're embarrassed. People are thanking you."***

***"It wasn't me."***

***"You're such a tsundere. You're a terrible liar."***

Arina groaned ***"Ah well"*** and ruffled her hair.

***"Fine, it was me."***

***"Its okay. I know."***

***"..."***

***"What?"***

***"Mou..."***

***"You don't like it?"***

***"...I'm just not very good at being thanked."***

***"Heh, I see."***

***"You have an annoying laugh."***

***"So there is a cute side to you!!"***

***"Go away. I feel sorry for your sister."***

I bit back a chuckle and stood up.

***"I've got to help out the tea club, do you want to come?"***

***"....Yes."***

She's changing. Maybe this is who Arina really is.

But what I can say for sure is that the real Arina is asleep. She looks somewhat fake in front of me. It's not the true meaning of her philosophical identity, but it was like an image that seemed to wrap around and hide her body. She seems to be forcing herself to act like the Arina she is right now.

It could be that I'm mistaken. But I can feel it.

Even if this were true, I don't understand the reason. I'm not sure how avoiding people is benefiting her.

Arina passed by me.

At the same time as I feel relief at her unchanging profile, I realize the responsibility of interfering with others.

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# Chapter 14

Source: Airus Translations

REPORT

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Title: The Intelligence Operative From The Going-Home Club

Today, I helped out the newspaper club.

The newspaper club was seriously short on staff, and there were only five members. It seemed that they were desperate for information due to the nature of their club activities. Their role was to send out all kinds of information about school committees, club activities, trends, events, and so on.

Because of the shortage of **“personnel”** essential to their info gathering, their article contained a straightforward recruitment ad.

***The article simply stated, [Please give us a story for the newspaper club! Or people!]***

It seriously was on a flyer from the newspaper club that happened to be posted in the hallway.

I decided to go to the newspaper club, especially since there were large plans for Arina’s rehabilitation project at the moment.

After school, when Arina came to the Rose Garden, I immediately told her, ***“Let’s go to the newspaper club,”*** and we headed out together.

***“You finally decided to expose your abominable self to the press, didn’t you?”***

***“The newspaper club’s ability to send out information is limited to the school. If I was caught on an adult website, and it was published in the newspaper, I wouldn’t be socially killed. Do you know why?”***

***“Because it only goes around in school.”***

***“Nope. The correct answer is ‘it’s normal for high school boys, so there’s nothing to be surprised about’. In this day and age, no one has a pure browser history.”***

That’s what I said with a smirk on my face. And then I was kicked in the gut. My lunch was about to come out. It was really bad. I felt all my organs shrivel up from the impact, and I fell in the hallway.

My consciousness faded like a fog. My eyelids darkened a part of my vision, trying to lead me into the darkness.

So this is death. There was no fear. It just felt good with every breath I took. The last thing I saw was Arina looking at me as if she were looking at a cockroach. Then I closed my eyes.

***“Get up. Have some shame.”***

Of course, I didn’t die. A murder element is rated 18.

Arriving at the newspaper club, I politely knocked and asked for permission before entering the room.

***"I'm here because you were short on staff."***

A boy from the newspaper club stood up with a bright expression on his face.

***"Eh, really!? This is worth writing about-!"***

He raised his hands and looked up to the heavens, like a certain cover of a war movie. The one from the Vietnam war. ***[T/N: Don't know this movie, so if anyone knows, lmk]***

And I told Arina to come in.

***"And this one here is also helping. Nice to meet you."***

Sure enough, all of their eyes rounded in surprise. I was used to seeing this reaction, so I continued on with my words.

***"So, what kind of help does the newspaper club need?"***

The head of the newspaper club, Asakura Toma, replied enthusiastically.

***"The newspaper club, as you can see, has very few members. So we need someone to bring us information! I mean, I want you to do a story or an interview or something!"***

***"Do you think we'll be able to help you?"***

***"It's fine. Anyone can do it."***

***"Good. That's great, Arina."***

***"Yeah."***

***"Well then, let me explain it to you!"***

Asakura Toma started talking about what he wanted us to do.

First, an interview with the other clubs. The open day for the school is coming up, so he wants us to write an article introducing the clubs in the school for the people who are visiting. However, with only a few members, he said it would be a lot of work to visit that many clubs and write an article about each of them. Therefore, he asked me to help him with the interviews. , what's trending in the school.

They weren't in a hurry, but they wanted us to find out what's trending in the school and so on in order to publish it as local news.

Lastly, the professions that people want. They want to compile a ranking of everyone's dream jobs in order to give people who are preparing to take exams or are looking for a job a chance to expand their future path.

They requested these three things from us. Naturally, as the newspaper club moves, we, the assistants, move as well.

***"Okay, I got it. Do you have a deadline?"***

***"Hmm. Maybe two weeks? It would be great if you could help, even if it's just a little bit. Is your schedule okay?"***

***"No problem. Arina and I are apart of the Going-Home club, you know."***

***"Don't lump me in with you. Don't talk as if I'm also a pig like you."***

***"So when you eat pork, you think of me. Thank you."***

***"Shit, I'm gonna throw up."***

I don't want to be told that you're going to vomit with a blank expression. It was the usual flow of our conversations. Watching the exchange, Toma made a surprise face.

I've seen faces like Toma's many times before. It's extremely rare for Arina to talk to people, so it's a normal reaction. And I've heard that there are rumors around it is I who is talking to that woman. Yes, that's right, I'm just a gentleman.

So we were allowed to read the newspaper club's past articles, and I wrote down what I could refer to and thought about how to ask.

Arina next to me didn't think anything of it, so I said, ***"Hey, you're losing your soul,"*** and messed with her. Sure enough, she stepped on my toes as hard as she could. You gorilla, do you want to give me a fracture?

Once we had decided on our general plan, I reported back to Toma.

***"Roughly speaking, i've thought about the questions and so on. All we have to do now is submit them to the newspaper club, right?"***

***"Yeah, yeah. We'll write the story ourselves, you'll give us the information. That's really helpful! Thank you!"***

Accepting such pleasant thanks, we decided to start tomorrow. Arina will do it too, of course, but it's unlikely that she'll talk to me on his own, so we'll act buddy buddy after school.

Tomorrow, I'll talk like a suspicious person.

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# Chapter 15

Source: Airus Translations

REPORT

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Title: Interviews

***"Yo."***

***"Hmm?"***

I gave a pleasant greeting to Makoto and continued speaking.

***"I want to interview you, is that okay?"***

***"Interview?"***

***"It'll be about club activities and all that."***

***"I don't mind."***

***"Alright! So let's get straight to it. What kind of club is the badminton club? Oh, and by the way, this might be on the newspaper."***

***"If it's going to be in the paper wouldn't it be better to interview the club president?"***

***"Indeed. The president is kind of in charge. So can I ask you instead what you want to do in the future? Apparently, the newspaper job is doing some kind of job ranking. So help us out."***

***"Hmmm, my dream is to be a chef."***

***"Eh?! That's too unexpected! I thought you wanted to join the French Foreign Legion or something..." [T/N: French Foreign Legion]***

***"Why do you think I'm going to be a soldier..."***

***"I'd never know if I didn't ask. Thanks."***

First of all, I'll add chef to the list of dream jobs. This is going to take a lot of asking. Since we're going to be tallying up the numbers, it's not going to be fun for the newspaper club or the readers unless there's a lot of data.

I walked into the next classroom and looked for Yuri.

When Yuri, Shirona, and Ran saw me, they waved. Alright, let's do this.

***"Hello, tennis club girls."***

***"You wanted to see us?"***

Yuri responded with a nasty grin.

***"Yep. The newspaper club asked me to do something for them, and I need to ask the head of the tennis club, Yuri-neechan, to promote the tennis club."***

***"Eh? Sui joined the newspaper club?!"***

Shirona's eyes fluttered from side to side and she let out a loud voice.

***"No, no, I'm just a volunteer. I'm not joining the club. Arina and I-"***

I thought I had slipped up here and quickly held my tongue. I'm not sure if I'm acting too close to Arina, or if I'm causing any unnecessary rumors to start up again. I have a feeling that she might have a knife next time.

***"My mistake. I have a special relationship with the Mariana Trench. It's very deep."***

***"What?"***

***"Eh?"***

***"Hmm?"***

Yuri, Shirona, and Ran all had question marks above their heads. Only one of them, Yuri, had a sinister smile on her face. Oh no. This chick understands. She hasn't been fooled.

***"Hey, what trench? The Ma-Arina Trench? Right?"***

***"Easy, Yuri. It's the Mariana Trench. The Mariana Trench is huge. It's so deep that Everest would be buried in it, over 10,000 meters deep. Holy shit, that's scary."***

***"Huh? The great Ma-Arina trench?"***

***"Yuri, that's not it. It's the Mariana Trench."***

Shirona's naturalness helped me out. Yes, say more, Shirona, it's the Mariana Trench!

Ran seemed to realize something and her expression was similar to Yuri's. Then she also opened her mouth.

***"Nope, she's right. Ma-Arina Trench."***

***"Eh?! I don't know if that's it..."***

***"Shirona, it's the Ma-Arina Trench. Ran is right."***

***"Ma-Arina Trench...?"***

Two sets of eyes looked at me anxiously and expectantly. Trapped and with no more excuses, I fessed up.

***"Fine. I'm teaming up with Arina to volunteer in the newspaper club."***

At my words, the students around the four of us took a look at me. I didn't mean to say that so loudly. I got some not-so-pleasant attention, and in the spur of the moment, I looked for and found Arina. She was staring at me with eagle-sharp eyes. It looked like she was trying to shoot a beam out of her eyes.

***"Heeeh? Hmm? Well, it's okay. You're promoting the tennis team right?"***

***"Yes ma'am, that's right..."***

I realized how horrible girls are.

If you asked me to write about this horror in 10,00 words or so, I would write it in 100,000 words instead. It would make an entire book.

I was thinking about this as I scribbled down Yuri's story on my notepad. What a terrible person.

I didn't have any energy to retaliate, and I ran my pen around like an artificial intelligence being abused by humans. In a way, I thought, it was

inevitable that they would turn against humans. That's why the Terminator would declare war on us.

***"...Is that okay?"***

***"That's enough. , may I ask what jobs you three want to have in the future?"***

***"I want to be a teacher!"***

***"I think I'll be a hairdresser."***

***"An illustrator!"***

***"I see, I see."***

Surprisingly, they didn't want to have the same job. However, I've only interviewed Makoto, Yuri, Shirona, and Ran, so it's hard to draw conclusions.

I drew a single tally mark for each and every one of the positions.

***"Well, thanks. I might ask you guys some things again, so we'll get in touch."***

***"Got it, give my regards to the Mariana Trench."***

***"That's not it, Maria... Oh, fine.. Mariana Trench."***

It seems that Yuri has taken a liking to treating me badly. She has a personality suitable for the position of club president of an important athletic club. She's like Shirona. I have a wobbly personality, so this is also in a different direction. In other words, I was taken in.

I decided to ask Arina about the results. I left the three of them and went over to Arina, who was reading unhappily. Naturally, curious eyes that were scattered around the classroom looked at us.

***"Hey, shimoheihei. Are you doing good?" [T/N: Not sure what this is □□□□□□]***

***"No. I hope your brain dies."***

***"Since when am I some kind of philosophical zombie..."***

***"So."***

Damn it, respond to my jokes. You'll end up just like a crazy guy!

***"So let me ask you what your dreams are. Is there a job you'd like to have?"***

***"..."***

***"What, is there not on? I thought for sure that Hiwa Arina-san was aiming to be a 'chick connoisseur' who differentiates between male and female chicks, but..."***

***"In three days. You're going to be fed to the crayfish in the pond."***

***"Then everytime you see a crayfish, remember me. 'Come to think of it, there was someone who did something for me', and I'll find you from the other side and curse you."***

Arina went back to reading awkwardly when I thought she was going to stab back. Hey, I'm not done talking to you. I tried talking to her, but she ignored me.

Then my amazing ears caught a slight whisper.

***"After all, did that person do all the work for Arina...?"***

I huffed and looked back at my statement, realizing that I had stepped on a land mine.

***"Ahhhhhhhhhhhh!"***

***"What are you doing?"***

***"Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!"***

***"Shut up. I'm gonna cut your aorta."***

***"So, Arina... is there a job you aspire to..."***

***"No..."***

***"I see... then after school, go to the Rose-."***

I slapped myself as I was about to repeat my mistake again. That was dangerous. Any talk of the Rose Garden is dangerous. If I said that, I would be done. I don't know what any listeners would be imagining if they heard Arina and I in the Rose Garden. There would be no choice but to go into their dreams and rewrite their memories like in the movies.

***"Then, see you in 10 years..."***

What are you talking about? Someone from the future? Arina had an incomprehensible expression. It can't be helped. I don't get it either. Where's the solution to this situation? Why isn't there a solution? Help me, Einstein.

When I left the classroom, I bumped into Makoto in the hall.

***"Oh, Sui."***

***"Don't put 'Oh' and 'Sui' together. It sounds like 'sewage'." [T/N: Osui in Japanese = Sewage]***

***"What's going on?"***

***"I wonder what's going on..."***

***"I don't know why, but looking at Sui now, I have a feeling of deja vu... ah!"***

***"Stop it. You're going to remember a bitter memory!"***

Makoto flashed back to the time he had confessed to Arina. He groaned and went back to the classroom, holding his stomach. You must be pretty traumatized, dude.

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# Chapter 16

Source: Airus Translations

REPORT

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Title: The Girl Who Started To Spit Venom

Makoto was slumped over my desk. He was dealing with his PTSD. He'll get over it eventually, so I didn't bother him and let it pass.

on the list is Miyazaki Shinji. He's the president of the art club, so let's go interview him.

Shinji was drawing his own hand. Given that he even uses his break to draw, he seems to be quite fond of drawing.

***"Thanks for the other day."***

***"I appreciated Arina modeling for us."***

***"That's good. Then, without further ado, can I do an interview with the art club? The newspaper club wants to write an article about clubs for the new students..."***

***"Sure! I'd love to see that kind of thing since our club members are dwindling!"***

It helped that Shinji was talkative. Earlier, I had experienced hell in the next class over, so it was a world of difference. It was heaven. It's wonderful!

Having finished the interview with Shinji, I decided to ask him what job he would like to have.

***"Shinji, is there a job you want?"***

***"For now, I want to work with CG. After graduating from high school, I plan to study technology at a vocational school."***

Huh. I don't understand this world at all. Is he going to be designing the objects and characters in a game? I don't understand even 1 millimeter. I'm sure that the drawings kills he cultivated in the art club will be used in some way like that.

It was almost the end of the lunch break, so I asked around some more for jobs people wanted, since I didn't know anymore club presidents. It seemed rude to ask a bunch of people, but I'm glad they answered me with a smile.

After school, I went to the concession stand first. And my ship sank. I can't win. It's impossible to move someone in the judo club unless you hit them with a tractor.

I then asked a member of the judo club what kind of job he wanted. He said he wanted to be a tax accountant, and the first thing he wanted to do was go to university. I realized that outside appearances don't tell you what's on the inside.

Arina was already sitting in the Rose Garden, and there were more flowers I hadn't seen before. This place is becoming a flower garden now.

***"What are the results?"***

***"I have nothing."***

***"I see, good luck with being a future chick appraiser. All right, let's go around to some clubs."***

***"I'll make you into scrambled eggs."***

***"Yeah, yeah, my brain are scrambled eggs to begin with."***

Arina and I left the Rose Garden right away.

We decided to swing by the baseball club first. The sun was shining even though it was in the latter half of September, and Arina quickly put her hat on.

The field was filled with shouting and the sound of balls being hit. The dust and dirt stained clothes looks like the baseball club.

***"Yup, this is a very active baseball team."***

***"It really is. It's too hot and stuffy for me."***

***"Don't say that. People are bad at different things. You're worse at socializing with people than extraterrestrial beings."***

***"Is that so."***

Yes, that's right.

We walked up to the baseball coach and talked to him.

***"Excuse me. Are you the baseball coach?"***

***"Yeah. What's up?"***

***"The newspaper club wants to advertise your activities in an article for next year's freshmen, but they're short on staff, so we came to ask on their behalf. Do you have any time to spare?"***

***"Oh, I see. If that's the case, can you give me another ten minutes? We'll have a short break soon, and you can ask the head of the team there."***

***"Thank you. I'll be waiting."***

Arina and I sat on the grass for a while.

Feeling the breeze in a daze, this moment of time that was passing slowly wasn't bad.

Arina's swooping hair was pulled back into a ponytail. If she kept quiet, she's beautiful. It's such a waste."

***"Just keep your eyes forward. time you look at me, I'll skewer you through the brain."***

***"Arina-san, does that mean I'm going to have to pull the stick out of my ass? Or is it the front? In front of me-"***

***"Please die."***

Hell begins every time she starts talking. Honestly, I'm used to it. But a little bit or so doesn't push me over the edge. Most of the time, the guy who's depressed is the one who really fell in love with Arina. If you're rejected to the tips of your hair by someone you really love, it's hard to

recover. It destroys the rational part of you, not your instincts. You try keeping up a front. You're just trying to keep a straight face.

***"I told you I'm going to skewer you."***

***"In that case, will it stick out from the front or back?"***

***"All right, I'm gonna snap the lightning rod off the roof. It's best to try."***

***"Stop it, stop it."***

We were talking about something stupid and then the whistle blew. Apparently, it was the break.

I got up and we walked up to where the baseball team was hanging out.

We had no idea who the captain of the team was, so we asked a freshman who was nearby. The freshman pointed to a stranger with a hot-blooded look. I walked up to him and spoke to him as soon as I could.

***"Are you the head of the baseball team?"***

***"Hmm? Yeah, I am."***

***"The newspaper club is planning to have an introduction of each club's activities for the new students next year. We're here to do an interview on behalf of the newspaper club, is that okay?"***

***"Everything's fine, but-"***

***"What is it?"***

The club president looked at Arina and was astonished.

Arina raised her eyebrows and cocked her head in an intimidating manner. She understood it as well as I did, and I didn't understand what was happening either.

***"No, it's nothing."***

***"All right, then, let's continue."***

The baseball club president, Nakatsu Hitaki, spoke while behaving suspiciously. He spoke with the occasional hand gesture while keeping his gaze fixed towards the lower right. The content of his speech could be described as quite exemplary.

The only things that were unnatural were Nakatsu's suspicious behavior and Arina crossing her arms and acting like a guy in a game's character select screen. I think I'm slowly figuring out their relationship.

***"That's all, is this fine?"***

***"Okay, okay, give it to the newspaper club."***

***"All right, let's just..."***

And when I was about to tell Arina 'Let's go' since we had finished out business,

***"Wait, Stalker-san."***

Arina said that in a mocking tone of voice.

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# Chapter 17

Source: Airus Translations

[REPORT](#)

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Title: Stalker Boy

I thought for sure that Arina had started cursing me. But thinking about it calmly, that would be strange. I have no reason to stalk Arina, since I know she would kill me if I did that.

The first to react to Arina's words was Nakatsu Hitaki, the head of the baseball club, who was trying to get back to the field. He froze and looked back at us awkwardly.

***"It's you. I just forgot your name. You're no longer a stalker, right?"***

Hitaki was silent, dripping with cold sweat. Or maybe it was normal sweat.

***"Stalker-san, you became to head of the baseball team. Good for you. Stalking the ball instead of me is more in line with your sexuality, so do that from the start. Stalker."***

***"No, that's not..."***

***"What? You mean I'm wrong?"***

***"That's right..."***

***"So you'd follow me home, haunt the library, and even come near my house. If you're not a stalker, what are you then?"***

The members of the baseball club who were there, including me, were glancing at us. The coach seemed to have figured something out and said, ***"You guys go practice!"*** and everyone scattered except me, Arina, and Hitaki.

***"It's not particularly a bad thing to turn my love towards something."***

Wow, that's one hell of a tone of voice that doesn't sound like he means it.

***"But it's bad to keep doing things that people don't like. No matter how much you claim it's an expression of love in your mind, others will feel it. It's in the past, but the next time you come after me, I'll report it to the teachers."***

Somehow I could read the connection that Nakatsu Hitaki was stalking Hiwa Arina. I felt sorry for Hitaki as he grew more and more pale while shriveling up, but what he did was bad.

At the same time, I wondered if Arina was having a hard time as well. I wasn't worried about her, but if I found out that a weak high school girl was being targeted by a stalker, I'd be worried. Whether Arina is weak or not seems debatable, but apart from that, it's still annoying.

***"You get it?"***

***"...Yes."***

***"I see."***

Yep, he got the decisive line, her signature ***"I see"***.

Arina turned her back to Hitaki and started to walk away. I told Hitaki, whose face was clouded with regret and impatience, ***"Go for it"***. That's all I could say. I wasn't apart of the matter, nor was he a friend.

I bowed to the coach and walked away. The last thing I saw was the coach taking Hitaki somewhere.

I caught up with Arina and got a mouthful from her.

***"What's next?"***

***"The track team."***

***"I see."***

***"Don't lose your temper, okay?"***

***"I'm not mad."***

***"He's been stalking you?"***

***"Yeah. It was a frequent thing just about a month ago. I was going to tie up his hands and feet and throw him in the river, but I wasn't strong enough to do that, so I ignored him. Now that he's in charge, he's pretty busy. This past month it hasn't happened much, but there were some times it happened."***

***"His attachment is like instant glue..."***

***"Maybe it was the bullshit rumor and you and me dating, or something, that got his attention and made him start hanging around me again."***

***"Arina, shit is dirty."***

***"Shut up. Let's go to the track team immediately."***

She ran, which was really unusual.

I'd never seen her run before. I'd been by Arina's side on many occasions, helping out the tennis team, in the gym, but she'd always been slow. She untied her hair and ran off with a beautiful form. Her shimmering hair reflected in the setting sun. So free and alone, her beauty self-righteously sitting in a part of the world.

I admired her a little.

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# Chapter 18

Source: Airus Translations

[REPORT](#)

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Title: Dyed in Black

***"I'm back."***

***"Welcome back, Imouto."***

I was lying in the living room and kept receiving images from the TV to my brain. I just mindlessly receive and sense information. I felt like my body was gone. I want to rot like this forever.

It was my sister's voice that freed me from this narcotic sensation.

***"Mom, Nii-chan[1] died."***

***"I'm alive. I was just synchronizing my body with the TV."***

***"It's no use, his heart isn't coming back..."***

My sister makes the same jokes I do because of our blood connection. Maybe it wasn't genetic and instead just me. I see and talk to my sister 365 days a year, so it's no wonder she's dyed my color.

While my sister was eating my mother's food, I kept watching the TV.

I was watching a program that summarized the news that happened during the week. I nodded and almost muttered, ***"If there's an owl in my room, I'll have to ask dad to get rid of it,"*** but I decided to remain silent. Arina would probably hit me with a crowbar.

I just kept lying there like a seal. I listened and watched the whole time as the TV reported everything one should know about the situation in the Middle East, fires, internet fires, disasters, and international affairs.

I had heard that if you kept watching the TV, you would become an idiot. I'm now just a clown being controlled by a machine. I don't want to move anymore.

***"Nii-chan, do you know a guy named Nakatsu?"***

My sister asked me that while playing with her phone. So she also seems to be one of those people being controlled by a machine.

The world is increasingly outsourcing its will to machines. Air conditioning to control body temperature, smartphones to pass the times, systems for traffic management networks, and computers as the basis for business continuity. We live in a society that is based on all of these things. We are replacing human hands with machines and automating in the name of ***"efficiency"***.

It's great, but one day it'll all collapse. Large numbers of jobless people will suffer looking for jobs. Someday artificial intelligence will overtake the world and humans will lose their nerve in the face of their perfection. Their

technology will be so superior that their efforts will be shallow. It will be similar to the fact that aliens will not appear before us.

***"You're dying, Nii-chan."***

***"No. I'm close to gaining access to the Akashic Records." [2]***

***"What's that? So, do you know this Nakatsu guy?"***

***"We met today if they have the same last name."***

***"I heard that my classmate's brother goes to the same high school as Nii-chan. So I just contacted him, and he said his brother came home with a despairing look on his face. He didn't say anything at all, so I got worried and asked you."***

***"Because I go to the same high school with him."***

***"Yes, yes. His name is Hitaki. Do you know him?"***

So it was Stalker-kun.

***"I got acquainted with him today. Don't mess with them."***

***"Is there a reason for that?"***

***"Well, if I had to put it some way, it would be 'twisted love'. You shouldn't tell that classmate of yours. They'll be disillusioned."***

***"I don't really get what's going on..."***

***"Yep, same here."***

How desperate are you, Stalker-kun?

If you were that shocked by Arina's threats, it must have been a pretty strong love. Or maybe the coach said something to you. Either way, there are some lines you shouldn't cross. **[3]** That was a crime.

You should be punished accordingly.

For what it's worth, Arina is a girl, too. Terrorizing a girl can't be considered good.

Well, whatever. It's Saturday tomorrow. I don't care.

I woke up at 8 am.

This sucks. I woke up in the morning when I tried to get 10 hours of sleep on my days off. I need 10 hours to feel refreshed. Even so, I accumulate sleep debt every weekday, so I have to pay it off on the weekends. **[4]**

It was an incoming call on my phone that cut through my sleep. Who was that guy who didn't sleep in silent mode?

It was me.

***"Sakaki here."***

***'So you're fine.'***

I couldn't recognize them while sleepy.

***"Excuse me, who are you?"***

***'Are you kidding me?'***

***"No, really. I don't know who you are..."***

As I gradually woke up, I had an idea of who the voice belonged to.

***"Could it be Arina?"***

***'Yes.'***

***".....Whaa!?"***

I don't have Arina's number or email address. I didn't tell her mine, and I couldn't think of anyone who would relay Arina to me. However, there must be someone.

***"-How the hell did you get my number...? No way, a credit card bureau--"***

***'From Akakusa-sensei.'***

Sensei... at least protect my personal information... I don't even know your number to begin with... I'm sure you gave Arina a document like a contact list...

***"Well... what can I do for you, then?"***

***'She wants us to come to school to help out. Come on, get your ass over here.'***

***"Eeehh~, I'm, not, list, en, ing~"***

Pfft.

She cut me off so I had no choice but to go. I don't want to get killed after the weekend.

I called out to my sister who was having breakfast in the living room.

***"I'm off to school."***

***"Nii-chan, it's Saturday. Are you still sleepy?"***

***"I know it is. I'm helping out at school."***

***"Eh!? Can I go too?"***

***"For what?"***

***"As a rehearsal for open campus!"***

***"You don't need to rehearse for open campus..."***

***"Also, I want to see who Arina-san is!"***

***"No, Arina isn't there. She doesn't have club activities."***

I didn't want any hassle, so I brushed her off.

***"Then why are you going to school, Nii-chan? You're not in a club either, are you, Nii-chan?"***

***"The Going-Home club doesn't equal weekends off."***

***"But you've been home on weekends all this time, haven't you?"***

***"...Yes."***

***"Arina-san is definitely involved, right?"***

***"...Yes."***

This was going to get messy. I'm sure of it.

Notes:

**[1]** 'Nii-chan' is an informal way to refer to an older brother, and implies a close relationship between the brother and younger sibling (it can also be used by older family members to address younger males, but you don't see it often in anime/manga/webnovels/light novels).

**[2]** The Akashic Records would be a pain to explain. If you're interested, click this link.

**[3]** The raws said: ***"Either way, there are some things you shouldn't do."***

**[4]** For anyone that's confused here, Sui is talking about how he misses sleep on the weekdays, so he needs to make up for it by sleeping more on weekends.

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# Chapter 19

Source: Airus Translations

[REPORT](#)

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Title: Nice to Meet You

I haven't gone to school with my sister since elementary school.

We used to go to school together with our school bags on our backs. I thought how we've grown up. It's been more than five years. Kids grow up so fast.

My sister and I wore windbreakers to school. We were dressed lazily and uniforms weren't needed for my sister to come to school. Because she looks like an athlete.

When we arrived at the school, my sister exclaimed, ***"Oh~"***

***"So this is Nii-chan's high school?"***

***"Yeah. I'm a weirdo, but this is a pretty good high school. Don't worry, it's not a zoo. You won't get eaten alive."***

***"Good work, Nii-chan."***

***"This is nothing."***

***"It's pretty good, huh?"***

***"Call me if you need anything. Don't wander around the school building. But since you're dressed like an athlete, they won't notice."***

***"Roger!"***

My sister ran past the school gate. It seems that she's healthy.

I decided to go to the Rose Garden for now.

Thinking back, I don't know where to find her in the school. That venomous-tongued rose called me one-sidedly. At least tell me where to meet you before you hang up.

I walked into the quiet school building and headed for the Rose Garden. If she's here, that's where she'll be.

I opened the door to the Rose Garden, and sure enough, Arina was there in her uniform.

***"Wow, you're wearing your uniform."***

***"That's amazing, you actually can wear clothes."***

***"Somehow you're complimenting me like I'm a caveman. I'm pretending to be an athlete because I didn't want to wear my uniform."***

***"Even though it's easy for you to be mistaken for a pill bug. Pretending to be an athlete is reckless."***

I can never win against her. So I walked away.

***"What do we do now?"***

***"Let's go to Akakusa-sensei."***

The sound of our footsteps echoed in the quiet school. We arrived at the staff room in silence.

***"Akakusa-sensei. We're here."***

***"Ara, thank you. Sorry, Sui-kun, it's your day off."***

***"No, no, it's for sensei's sake."***

Arina looked displeased.

***"So, what do you want us to do?"***

***"I need you to move some things from the nurse's office."***

***"Alright, got it."***

So I came to school.... just to die...

Arina agreed without a single disagreement, ***"I understand"***. Why does this person have such a different attitude than me?

Please, just let me sleep. But there was no way I could say that to Akakusa-sensei, so we headed to the infirmary as soon as possible.

As soon as we unlocked the door, Akakusa-sensei told us what to do.

***"First of all, Sui-kun, can you take this to the front of the staff room?"***

***"Yes ma'am."***

I climbed the stairs with a middleweight bookshelf. Why am I doing this?! I'd rather clean my room than clean the school on my day off.

But I'm glad Arina's here. She would have to do a job she would have refused 120% of the time. The fact that she came means that she has a weakness for Akakusa-sensei. I'm weak against her too, but in a different way.

I put the shelf near the entrance of the staff room and went back to the infirmary.

***"Sensei, I'm done."***

And my body stiffened like lead.

It wasn't a lucky lewd moment. It's not like Arina was changing clothes or Akakusa-sensei was undressing. Whenever such a convenient scene descends, it's only when you aim for it.

Something is wrong with Arina.

It wasn't the cold and intimidating Arina, but a soft, gentle Arina was sitting in the chair. For a moment I thought it was someone who looked like Arina.

And when she saw me, she didn't just get in a bad mood, she nodded to me. She's been cursing me since we've met, and now she's showing respect. This couldn't be happening. It's still more likely that the clock will break, land in the pool, and return to its original state.

***"A...rina?"***

***"Yes. I'm Hiwa Arina. Nice to meet you."***

Nice to meet you.

her voice was very clear and pure.

That meant it wasn't a lie or a joke.

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# Chapter 20

Source: Airus Translations

[REPORT](#)

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Title: Duplicate Rose

Nah, nah, nah.

You've seen me many times, or rather, you've seen me almost every day. What do you mean, 'Nice to meet you.' Does Arina have a twin and the other one is playing a joke on me or something? If that's the case, Arina could learn something from you. If she acted like this, she could make a name for herself as a wonderful beautiful girl[1]. It's ten times better than the venomous tongue character.

***"No, not 'nice to meet you'. That's kind of a new harsh remark."***

***"...I'm sorry. I apologize if I hurt you."***

***"Eh, no, no, no, no, Arina-san? You haven't bitten off much today. What's wrong?"***

***"Did I bite you!? I'm so sorry! I apologize!"***

***"Whoa, whoa, whoa! You can sit down now! What's wrong with you, Arina?!"***

Hiwa Arina has completely changed into a beautiful girl.

Her personality was the complete opposite of what it was just a few minutes ago. If the original Arina was a habanero, then the current Arina is a soft ice cream. That's how much her personality did a 180. The current Arina is too defenseless. It was enough to make me develop a genuine desire to protect her.

If Arina was in this state in her class, the men around her would do their best to follow her. The harem world was complete with all the pampering. Makoto would confess his feelings to her again, and the baseball club's head would start stalking her again.

***"Sui-kun, she's really Arina."***

***"Akakusa-sensei, I already know. Is this an IQ test?"***

"No. She's the real Hiwa Arina.

***"Are you talking about the philosophical side of things? Something like defining identity?"***

***"It might be related. As a matter of fact, she has a dual personality, a dissociative identity disorder."***

Dual personalities.

This was the first time I've seen it.

***"Dual... personalities?"***

Akakusa-sensei has studied psychiatry, and in talking to her, found out that she had a dual personality. And that was early on.

Hiwa Arina has two personalities.

One is the original personality, the now-gentle Arina. She's the personality Hiwa Arina has always had since she was born.

The second is the venomous-tongued Arina I've always seen. This is the personality that was born at a certain point and has been in control of Arina for a long time.

When Hiwa Arina entered high school, she already had a dual personality. No one had noticed it. There was no such description on her health certificate.

For some reason, the 'Venomous-Tongued Arina' kept taking precedence over the 'Base Arina', according to Akakusa-sensei.

***"The reason I asked Sui-kun to reform Arina-san is because I want her to go back to the same Arina-san she was."***

***"Isn't that what's happening right now?"***

***"It's only temporary. I can only wake her up for a limited time. A few more minutes, and she'll be gone."***

***"Can't you do something...?"***

***"She's going through some kind of trauma. I can't help her because I don't understand it. But Arina-san's main, strong-willed personality could be due to her base personality's defensive instincts. In fact, Arina-san's unstable right now. So if her main personality starts to subconsciously believe that it's not needed, something might change. Well, there's absolutely no evidence to support that, though. I'm not even halfway through psychiatry."***

***"Is that why you asked me to do this?"***

***"Sui-kun's character was suitable since your personality doesn't match Arina-san's rhythm. Most of the time, with Arina-san's rejection, everyone will disappear, but you won't. That would be a factor that would prevent her from achieving her raison d'être." [2]***

"Ummm. Does that mean I'm going to be a hindrance to the main Arina's goal of 'pushing people away'?"

***"Yeah. I'm sure you're under a lot of stress, but please put up with it. And when you do, she'll be gone."***

I shuddered when I heard her story and realized that what I was doing was pretty heavy.

I'd be saving one girl, but at the same time, I'd be eliminating another. In other words, the Arina I've been dealing with would be gone. Can I do that?

I can't see the venomous-tongued Arina as evil. To me, she's just normal Arina. The mild-mannered Arina in front of me seemed more like a fake.

But that's what's bothering Arina right now.

***"I wanted to tell Sui-kun about this today."***

And soon the main Arina came back to life. That look of frustration at the world. Normally, I would feel dejected, but this time, I was filled with a sense of relief.

***"You look like an octopus. You look so ugly."***

***"That sounds like a compliment to me right now."***

Before leaving, Akakusa-sensei said in my ear, ***"Please. I can't do anything about it."***

I'll do it because I have to. But after hearing about her dual personalities, I knew I had to reset our goals again. It's absolutely useless to do it properly. It would end up hurting Arina.

Arina and I left the school building.

We walked together.

Silence ensues. We should say something. But what should I talk about? I have a feeling I shouldn't be talking about our dual personalities. It seemed like taboo. A topic, a topic! I can't think of one!

While I was thinking this, I soon saw the school gates.

***"Ahhhhhh!"***

***"Shut up."***

***"Shit! I'm leaving my sister behind!"***

***"You're brought your sister with you? You siscon...."***

***"Wrong! She said he wanted to go... phone call, phone call...."***

***"I'm going home."***

***"Ah! She hang up! Why are you hanging up on me?!"***

***"Baaaaaaaaa!!!!"***

***"What is this, a terrorist attack!? Woah!"***

I was tackled.

A hunk of flesh dove into my stomach like a bullet and knocked me over.

It was my sister who flew out from the bushes with a strange cry.

***"What... the hell are you doing...."***

***"Waiting to surprise you! As expected, when you forgot about me and tried to walk through the school gates, I thought, 'Fuck you', but since you noticed, it's okay."***

***"Sorry. I forgot."***

***"You're terrible, the worst. So, who is this?"***

My sister's gaze turned to Arina.

***"She's Hiwa Arina. A dangerous creature with venom as deadly as a tarantula's." [3]***

***"Don't say weird things about me."***

She crossed her arms in her usual fashion and glared at me.

***"So you were Arina-san! I'm Sakaki Ugin, Sakaki Sui's sister! I'm a third year junior high schooler!"***

***"I see. Nice to meet you."***

It was a surprisingly weak response. Well, Arina only treats people the same age as her harshly. I wonder if there's a reason for that as well.

***"Hey, Nii-chan, Nii-chan! Arina is such a beauty! Wow! What kind of relationship do you guys have?!"***

My sister shakes me.

***"Nothing! Like I said before!"***

***"What did you tell your sister?"***

***"I didn't tell her anything! It's okay!"***

***"A year from now, you'll be back in the ground."***

***"At least not in the schoolyard... I don't want everyone to step on me..."***

Arina seemed to be satisfied and spun around to leave. My sister looked at Arina's back and said, ***"She's so dignified!"***

It seems that she has been brainwashed, so I'll fix her later.

Notes:

**[1]** Raws call her a 'bishoujo' which is specifically a young and beautiful girl.

**[2]** Raison d'être: the most important reason or purpose for someone or something's existence.

**[3]** Sui-san, a tarantula's venom isn't actually that deadly.

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# Chapter 21

Source: Airus Translations

[REPORT](#)

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Title: Us in the Cold

The leaves were getting more and more beautiful as the days passed. It was the season when leaves started to fall, but for me, who didn't like the cold, heading to school in the morning was a hellish march.

The reason why I call it a 'march' is because the same goes for everyone else. I step on the cold concrete with everyone else, walking like the dead. The sunshine seemed to shine brightly, making us feel as if the sun was desperate to melt us. What a hell.

When I looked at the buses that passed by, I saw people crammed inside, clutching the straps with their heads down. They looked like prisoners. It's as if they feared the prison that awaited them. **[1]**

***"I wanna go home..."***

That phrase represented me in my entirety.

Between 7:00 and 8:30 in the morning, Japanese people have probably retched inside their hearts a total of 30 million times. I've already contributed 100 times.

***"This sucks."***

'Sucks', a soprano echoed, in a tone that seemed to express my state of mind. I raised my face like a zombie.

***"Looking at you in the morning makes me want to die. Go dance on a highway."***

***"Ah, Arina."***

It was amazing that she was capable of making jokes like that. I couldn't even walk. I hate mornings. By the way, my sister, Ugin, doesn't hate mornings. Rather, she always has a brilliant smile when leaving the house. It was like the opening scene of a shojo anime.

On the other hand, I, her brother, am a zombie that wanders around eating people.

***"Don't mention me."***

***"I know."***

She knows exactly who she is. She knows that she's not the person who was given the name 'Hiwa Arina'. She knows that she's a pretender.

She was aware of it long before she met me. I wonder how she felt when she saw a man who declared that he was going to rehabilitate, no, eliminate, her.

I can't say she's being honest, but she's going along with my project. It's like she's actively trying to die. What the hell is she thinking?

Arina and I walked side by side until we entered the school building.

***"Arina, what the hell are you thinking?"***

***"About how I get you to Antarctica."***

***"I don't get along with penguins."***

***"You'll be food for the penguins."***

So I'm like pig food.

Stop making that face. I'm not proud of anything.

***"Well, I'll see you in the Rose Garden."***

***"Yeah."***

After the lunch war, I ate with Makoto.

I was excited to dig into the bread from the concession stand that I had miraculously won.

***"That looks really good."***

***"Of course. The demand is high but the supply is low. Athletes are my enemy."***

***"I think you're overexaggerating it... I'm in the badminton club."***

***"Oh, how did the fight between the badminton and tennis club end? I was only there at the start, so I don't know how it ends."***

***"Oh, yeah. That happened before, the Hiwa Arina intrusion."***

***"So, what happened?"***

***"We talked it over and it's settled. We got to an agreement."***

***"That's good. Arina won't get a bad taste in her mouth."***

***"Hey, can I ask you something?"***

***"What is it?"***

***"What are Hiwa and Sui doing, sneaking around?"***

***"Non-profit activities."***

***"Being volunteers, you mean?"***

***"That's right. Sensei gathered some weirdos."***

I'll say something like that. There may be some misinterpretation, but the general idea was right.

***"There's been a rumor that Sui and Hiwa have been up to no good."***

***"What the hell? I'm not going to start a terrorist attack."***

***"Don't do that. It's a possibility with Hiwa."***

***"She would probably drown a prefecture in the ocean."***

I went back to work on the mission the newspaper club had asked us to do.

I went around asking my classmates about their dream jobs and what was going on in school. I'm sure they must have been suspicious of me slipping in and out all of the time, but if I wasn't willing to do that, the newspaper club would never get data. Seeing the newspaper club members working so diligently, I thought they were desperate. Since they've asked me to do so, I'll take responsibility.

I guess they're not afraid to ask, given their crowded schedule. That made me think that the information we see in the newspaper was painstakingly obtained. However, shitty content is forever shitty.

***"What the heck?"***

Arina wasn't in class, so I went to the Rose Garden, and, as expected, she was reading as usual. I wasn't sure, but there seemed to be more flowers. Was she going to turn this place into a garden?

***"Have you made any progress since then?"***

***"No."***

***"Did you ask anyone?"***

***"No one."***

***"Hey, hey, the newspaper club is gonna cry."***

***"That's fine."***

This is not right.

Arina didn't take the initiative to help the newspaper club, so it would seem to make sense for Arina not to help, but that would be a pity for the newspaper club that believed in her. Besides, she didn't refuse. Even a kindergartner keeps quiet when they don't express their intentions clearly.

***"Arina, that would be irresponsible."***

***"Is that so?"***

***"This is for your own good, and the newspaper department trusts us. I wouldn't want to betray their expectations."***

***"I see."***

***"Hey, Arina, are you listening?"***

Arina's attitude was so infuriating that I lost my temper and said something nasty.

***"What do you think 'Arina' would do?"***

Her eyes widened and she looked up at me from her book as if she had been struck by lightning.

I regretted it after saying it. I chastised myself for saying something like that.

It was an awful thing to say.

***'The person in front of me turned against me and denied my existence.'***

It must have seen that way to her.

But she quickly lowered her eyes and began to read again. It was as if nothing had happened.

I couldn't say anything and a few seconds of silence descended on the Rose Garden. It was always quiet, but this time the silence was a very heavy, textured, painful silence.

Then she began to rummage through her bag and pulled out a binder with lots of papers tucked in it.

***"Do you have scissors?"***

I took a pair of scissors from the shelf and handed them to her.

Arina cut a piece of A4 paper in half. She placed it near me.

***"Distribute them. It's up to you."***

The paper that was handed to me was written in the form of a questionnaire with the information that the newspaper club was looking for. It was

somewhat funny that she had split the sheet of paper into two halves at the top and bottom to save paper, which was unlike Arina.

It was typed out instead of in handwriting, and it was a cute little sentence, so the gap was great.

***"What are you laughing at? I'm going to kill you."***

***"No, it's just so funny."***

***"I'll leave it to you."***

***"Ah, I'm sorry, Arina."***

***"I see."***

I stared at the paper Arina had made. It was really good.

With that questionnaire in my hand, I gave Arina a thumbs up to show her that it was GOOD[2]. Arina replied by holding up her middle finger, instead of her thumb, at me. Well, that's it. That's the Hiwa Arina I know.

I'll buy something for Arina after I finish handing out the questionnaire. I'll buy her something to eat as well as an apology. But I don't know what Arina likes to eat. Maybe something sweet?

***"Arina, what's your favorite food?"***

***"Is this a survey?"***

***"Just a personal question."***

***"I see. Marshmallows."***

***"So you like marshmallows. That's rare, but okay. I'll go pass these out."***

I was casually flipping through dozens of sheets of paper as I left the Rose Garden and found one sheet of paper that was already written on.

As I walked, I read it. There was no name or class written on the paper, so I didn't know who wrote this one.

My Dream Job: Novelist

School News: How would I know, idiot.

I almost burst out laughing. What the heck, 'How would I know, idiot'. The newspaper club would be shocked to see this.

I don't need to know who the unnamed responder was. Dreams aren't meant to be talked about.

I decided to secretly support this dream.

Notes:

**[1]** This entire part could be a nod to the Death Marches during the Holocaust. That, or I'm it wasn't an intentional parallel to the death marches.

**[2]** 'Good' is written in English

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# Chapter 22

Source: Airus Translations

REPORT

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Title: A Villainess' Prediction

When we visited the newspaper club again, Arina and I immediately turned in the form made by Arina.

Of course, all of the forms were filled out. I became an extra limb for Arina and handed them out. I was treated as a suspicious person, of course, but there's no problem. It wasn't like I was spreading propaganda or anything. I collected all of them in about three days and totaled the data. I was in charge of the tally, and I compiled the numbers that came up in each one. I was doing a complete service for them.

The guys in the newspaper club grabbed me with a glint in their eyes.

Asakura Toma, the president of the newspaper club, pat my shoulder.

***"Thank you! Really! Man, I didn't expect you to get this much information for us! This is awesome!"***

***"No problem. Ow, you're hitting too hard. These were made by Arina, by the way. I just tallied them."***

***"Wow! This really helps! Thank you so much!"***

Using a lot of exclamation points, Toma showed no signs of slowing down and moved on to Arina.

Toma firmly grabbed her right hand.

***"Arina-san! Thank you so much! We're gonna make a pretty good story from this data!"***

***"Yeah, yeah. Let me go."***

He smiled bitterly.

Toma apologized with a slight bit of laughter.

The club president, Toma, didn't seem to get any more excited, so we ran away and left.

We didn't have anything in particular to do, so we just headed home.

***"Toma, you were incredibly grateful."***

***"I'll change the skin on my hand when I get home."***

***"Are you an android?"***

We left school as the sunset turned the sky red.

Later on, the school newspaper was published.

To be honest, I had never read the newspaper. Mainly because I wasn't interested in it, but this time I looked through it.

The data Arina and I had compiled was neatly organized in a list format. It was a pleasure to see all the information we'd spent so much time asking

around about school trends, occupations, club activities, etc. to show up this way.

I went to show Arina as soon as possible. When I entered Arina's class, most of the students there had already gotten used to seeing us interact, so they didn't bother raising a fuss anymore.

Arina was looking annoyed, as usual, but I thought I saw a slight, just slight, smile at the newspaper. That was enough. It gives Arina a little bit of color in her heart.

***"What is this?"***

Arina pointed at the newspaper.

The article was mostly the data we'd gotten and I'd already read through it. I looked over it again, and the expression on my face grew dim. The last sentence of the article said:

***[I dedicate this article to the best couple, Hiwa Arina and Sakaki Sui]***

Arina got up from her chair.

***"I'm heading to the newspaper club."***

***"Wait, put the scissors down. Please."***

***"Fine. I'm going."***

***"Wait a minute, you put the scissors down, but leave the carving knife too. If you really want to take your carving knife with you, go to the art club, not the newspaper club."***

***"What was his name again?"***

***"It was Asakura Toma."***

***"Asakura Toma, right? I'll carve his name onto his forehead so I don't forget."***

***"At least use a sticker instead. I don't want to see your name on national news."***

Arina silently muttered that she was kidding in an unremorseful tone. If she was serious, that's pretty bad.

***"What are we doing today?"***

***"I don't have any plans. We're done with the newspaper club business, so I'll see what I can find."***

Then Arina abruptly glanced away from me.

***"...You, behind you."***

***"Eh?"***

Namiki Shirona was behind me. We went to the same middle school together and were in the same class the first year of high school. Shirona was clenching her skirt and looking at me with a serious look.

I was confused when I got caught between Arina and Shirona. What kind of chemical reaction was gonna happen?

***"What's up?"***

***"Can I have some time with you after school? Just the two of us."***

Just the two of us. What does that mean?

A 2nd year high schooler. A high school girl in the prime of her romantic life. Meeting with me alone. With a determined look.

I'd like to believe that in this case I could be forgiven for misunderstanding. Or, rather, forgive me.

***"I don't mind."***

Ah, now I've said it. I can't back out now.

***"I'm glad. Is there a place good for you?"***

***"Location.... location... place... area...."***

***"Why don't you use the old staff room?"***

Arina interfered. Has this woman gone crazy to recommend the former staff room - the current Rose Garden - of all places? You want me to go to that chaotic room full of flowers?

***"The old staff room... Ah, it's over there!"***

***"Shirona. I don't think we're allowed into the former staff room."***

I'm going to shut her off. The relationship between me and Arina is top secret. I've already told Tsuru, but I can't let it get out any more.

***"Really?"***

***"No, it's unlocked. No one ever comes near there."***

***"That's right! Thank you! Arina-san!"***

Arina whispered to Shirona, grinning nastily. Apparently she was enjoying this. For me, it could make my future relationships go crazy. She had the face of a devil.

I glared at Arina. I tried to appeal to her with my eyes, warning her not to say anything unnecessary.

But Arina made a fist and held the back of her hand to me. I was wondering what she was trying to do, but then she raised her middle finger at me. Her personality was so bad. Go live with Mother Teresa for a month.

***"So, the former staff room?"***

***"Yeah... sure."***

***"Okay! I'll see you after school."***

Shirona went back to her seat. Yuri and Ran were talking to Shirona, curious. Don't do that.

Then they turned to Arina.

***"What's the matter with you?"***

***"Isn't it fine? Enjoy your youth."***

***"You're gonna get in trouble... and the Rose Garden is in trouble..."***

***What are you going to do with all those flowers you brought in?"***

***"I'll make sure to collect them."***

***"Seriously. Why so much?"***

***"My heart whispers that to me."***

***"...Are you here?"***

I've never been so scared of the period after school. I'm too embarrassed to face the country's Going-Home club members. I'm failing as a club member. It's a good thing that there's no such thing as a ***"notice of termination"*** in the Going-Home club.

Please don't let me be wrong.

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# Chapter 23

Source: Airus Translations

[REPORT](#)

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Title: A Brave Mealworm and a Mocking Rose

After school ended.

I couldn't concentrate on class after Shirona said she wanted to talk alone. There was no way I could. I couldn't even remember if the current history teacher had hair or not.

When asked if they wanted to talk alone, 90% of high school boys would think of a confession. The remaining 10% can take energy pills. Online shopping.

While I was cleaning the classroom, I was terrified that my destiny was just around the corner. It didn't help that Makoto doesn't know what I'm going through, but I really wished he would stop playing Harry Potter with a broom between his legs. Come on, we're already in high school and you have no shame.

Suddenly, a question arose in my mind.

Why was I afraid of a confession from Shirona?

Of course, it wasn't a given that she'll confess, and it's completely just my prediction. But I'm gonna head to the Rose Garden under the assumption that I'll be confessed to. And that's what I'm afraid of.

Shirona is cute. She must be popular because she has a personality that would make you want to protect her. She asked me for advice once when she was confessed to. In the end, Shirona ended up refusing, but since she's going to confess, she must still be going as a likable girl. I'm not wrong in my perception.

It's not like I don't like Shirona, but why am I so eager to avoid her? I should be happy. But in my mind, I'm clouded with 'fear'.

So I hope I'm wrong.

I want it to be an irresponsible assumption.

My phone rang.

I went out to the hallway to check my phone screen as I was cleaning my classroom. It was Arina.

***"Hello, this is the Algerian Embassy."***

***'Is the mealworm absent?'***

***"What?"***

***'I heard he has a pseudonym, but his real name is Mealworm. I wonder if you have any idea of who he is.'***

***"The mealworm is hiding."***

***'So he got eaten by a swallow.'***

***"Did you sign up for a data plan just to curse at me?"***

***'Oh, quiet down. You're going to the Rose Garden, aren't you? I've cleaned it up for you.'***

***"Wait really? You're a lot smarter than I thought you were."***

During the call, I casually glanced at the students passing by and saw a student I knew well holding a phone to her ear.

***"If you're already near, just come straight to me..."***

***'I'm cutting it off.'***

Arina shamelessly walked up and faced me.

***"I'm not going in today. Have fun."***

***"That sounds weird, so please stop."***

***"Get going, Mealworm. I'll take care of any cleaning, so go."***

***"Eh, are you serious? That Arina would sacrifice herself for someone else?"***

***"Come on, get going. You can't keep contaminating the class. I want everyone who has your virus exterminated."***

***"I'm a creature that spits out poison, huh? You're better at spitting poison than I am."***

***"Yeah, yeah, I'll kill you."***

***"I'm going, I'm going. Stop making a fist."***

Taking the broom from me, Arina walked into my class. Surprisingly, my classmates were staring. Arina seemed to enjoy the reaction neatly, and began to seriously sweep, ***"I wonder where to sweep"*** she said. I wish she could always be that energetic. It's much more glorious than just focusing on her book.

Reluctantly, I headed to the Rose Garden, not wanting to ruin her behavior. The floor the Rose Garden was on was quiet.

The root of the reason for the quietness is the declining birth rate. The number of students was decreasing every year, so unnecessary space was increasing at the same time. Still, the school still has more than seven hundred students, so it's still a school that continues to exist. Even so, unneeded floors are being built up like ruins. The word 'skeleton' is appropriate.

I usually stay away from these floors. Occasionally, the bathroom is crowded, and I'll head up here. There's no one else who uses it anyways. It's safe to say that this floor is only used by me and Arina.

I arrived at the Rose Garden and took a breath.

I wonder if Shirona was already there. But I can't pull away anymore.

I put my hand on the sliding door and opened it.

It wasn't Shirona that I saw, but a Rose Garden with even more flowers.

***"I thought you said you took it down!"***

There were preserved flowers everywhere. There have been many of them before, but now the Rose Garden's in full bloom.

I was so distracted by the flowers that I didn't notice the paper on the desk until later.

It was written on A4 paper.

***[Anniversaries are supposed to be spectacular, right?]***

It was written in a flat font.

It's Arina. She's enjoying herself quite a bit. I'm sure she's gloating while cleaning up right now.

I shoved the paper in my pocket and sat down. I'll just leave it at that for now. There's no place to hide the flowers, and the atmosphere would become chaotic if she came in while I was cleaning them up. Let's just accept it.

I waited for a few minutes.

A small knock caused my calm heartbeat to quicken once more.

***"Come in."***

I peered fearfully at her face through the sliding door. It was Shirona.

***"Uwaa. It's amazing. So many flowers."***

***"I didn't know either. It was like this."***

***"It's beautiful. Is that for decoration?"***

***"Eh, isn't this a living flower?!"***

I am sorry, Shirona-san. I know everything. I wonder why this flower is dead and why it's here.

I don't seem to be good at lying. It makes me uncomfortable.

***"Are your club activities okay?"***

***"Yeah. Just a little bit."***

Just a little bit. A story that ends with a little bit.

***"Yeah, right. So what's the story?"***

My mouth is too nervous to speak. My hands were starting to get damp.

I was so embarrassed that I was getting caught up in the feeling that reality was diminishing.

Shirona was silent, as if she was having trouble speaking. It must have only been a few seconds of silence. But to me, it felt long.

She looked me in the eye. I almost looked away. But I don't.

Shirona was reflected in my eyes more delicately than usual. The ends of her hair and her irises don't look like the Shirona that I knew. Even if I knew it was a part of my imagination, I was conscious of it.

Slowly, her mouth opens and her white teeth peek out.

***"A kouhai[1] in the tennis club wants to confess to Arina-san."***

I grandly fell off of my chair.

I didn't know about that.

Notes:

***[1] Junior, underclassman, opposite of a senpai***

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